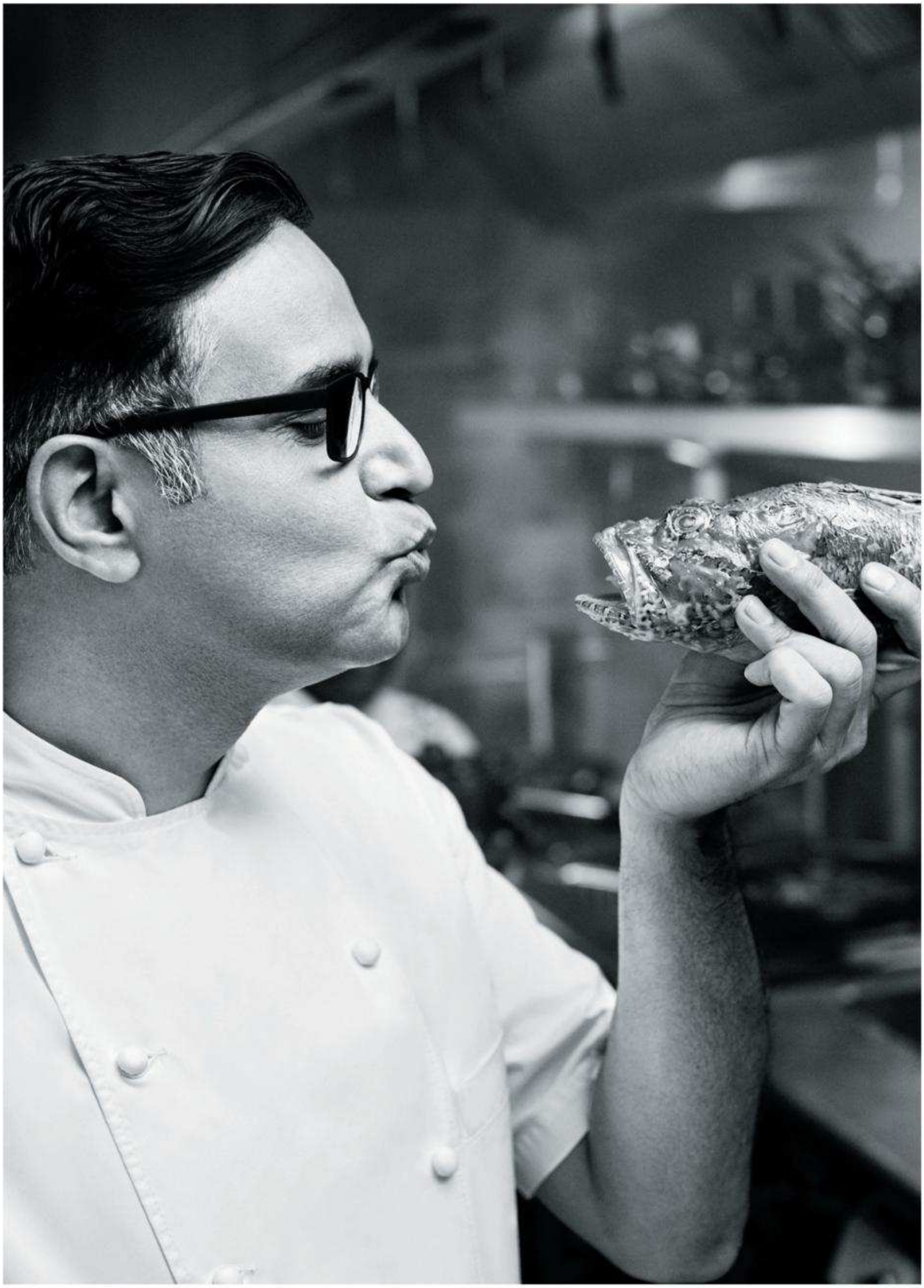
THE TRAVEL ISSUE

bon appétit

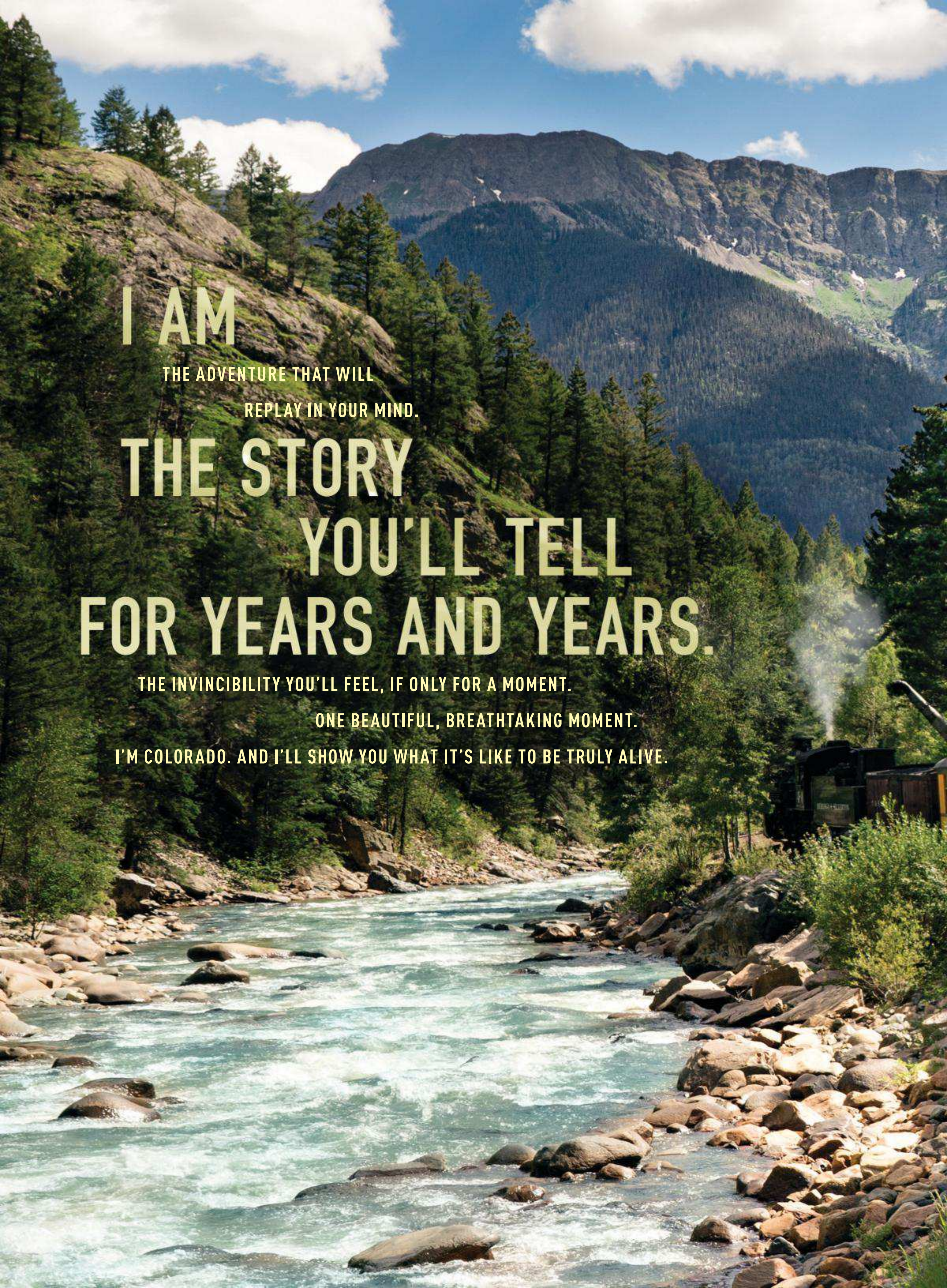
Summer Like An Italian

(Even If You're Not One)





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Got some spring cleaning on your agenda? Check out the Clean Slate special on P. 39.

LAKE COMO NAILS THE WHOLE "VILLA VIBES" THING. P. 80

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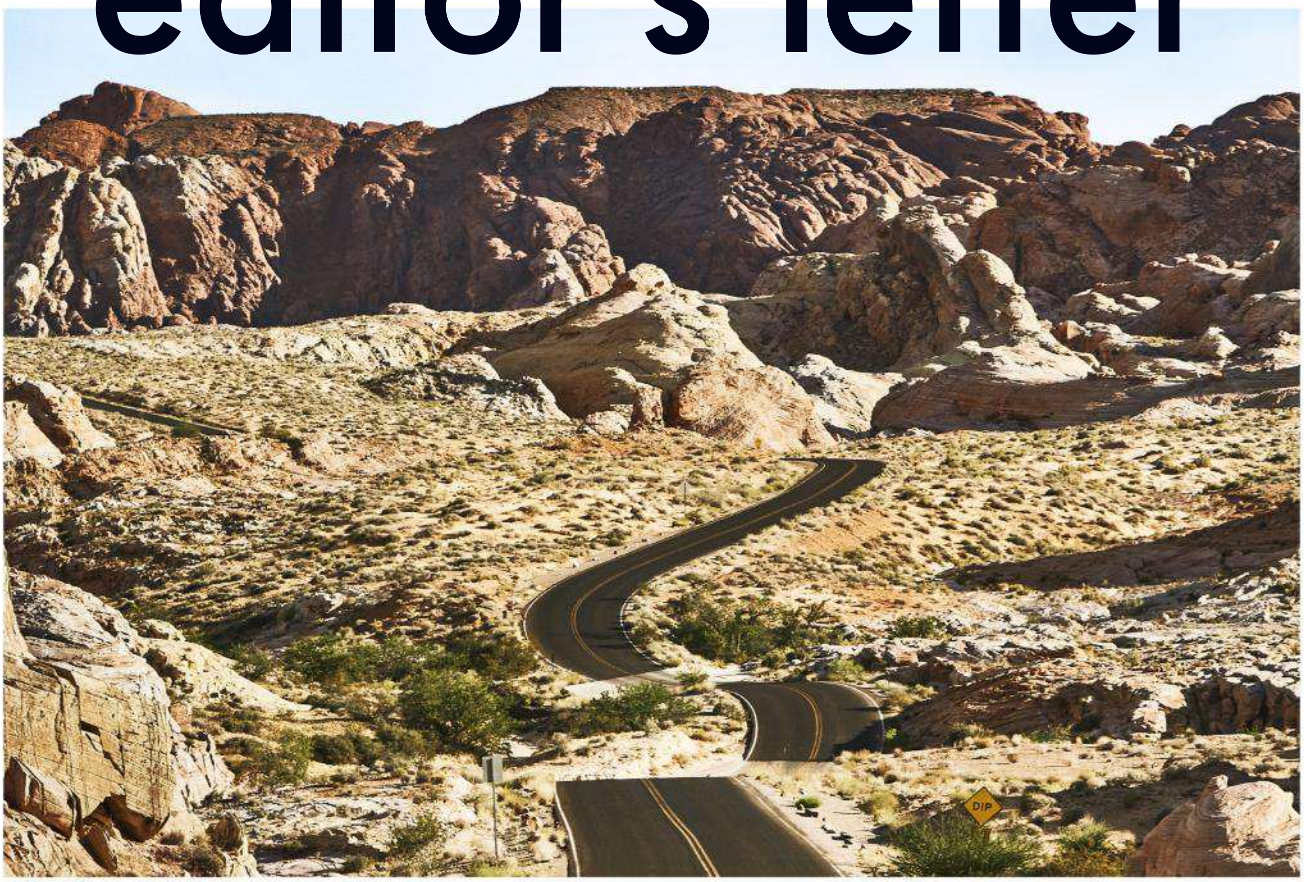
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editor's letter



NOWHERE FAST

› You ever do that thing where you're going a hundred miles an hour and you don't even realize it?

Last June my wife and I touched down in Arizona for a tenth-anniversary escape that I'm pretty sure Simone had been planning since 2007.

The idea was to drive from Phoenix to Sedona, spend the night, and then haul across the desert and mountains and evergreens and mesas and plateaus and buttes to a dreamy resort on the southern border of Utah.

A couple things, though, that I wasn't prepared for:

(a) The heat. When we landed at 5:20 p.m., my phone told me it was 116 degrees outside. Do you know what 116 degrees feels like? It's like when you walk out of an office building and you think you're getting hit in the face with steamy-hot air conditioner exhaust. But it's just the air outside. That's 116 degrees.

(b) The fact that I was so zenned out, the heat didn't even bother me.

Which is not normal. You see, I struggle with vacations. Or, at least, starting them. I'm restless and fidgety. I run wind sprints on the beach because I'm not sure what else to do with myself. It takes two days for the New Yorker in me to get lost.

But as Simone and I blasted along a wide-open highway, enveloped in a Georgia O'Keeffe–like palette of burnt umber and dusty sage, I wasn't restless at all. I was just like, "Whoa."

I had never visited the Southwest before. But there we were in one of those crossover hatchback thingamajigs, just flying along. A four-and-a-half-hour drive, the GPS told us? After about 15 minutes I stopped counting the time—or checking the speedometer. Simone had to point out I was doing 103.

Taking in the expanse of Glen Canyon, twisting our way up and over cliffs, I didn't want the drive to end. It was the opposite of being stuck in traffic on the BQE or 495. I didn't feel trapped and anxious; I felt freed.

I don't mean to get all new agey, but by the time we reached the resort, I was fully in the zone. And we quickly eased into a routine of hikes and naps and reading and sunset drinks, where we'd just stare out at the canyons, with no one or nothing in sight except for the occasional jackrabbit darting by.

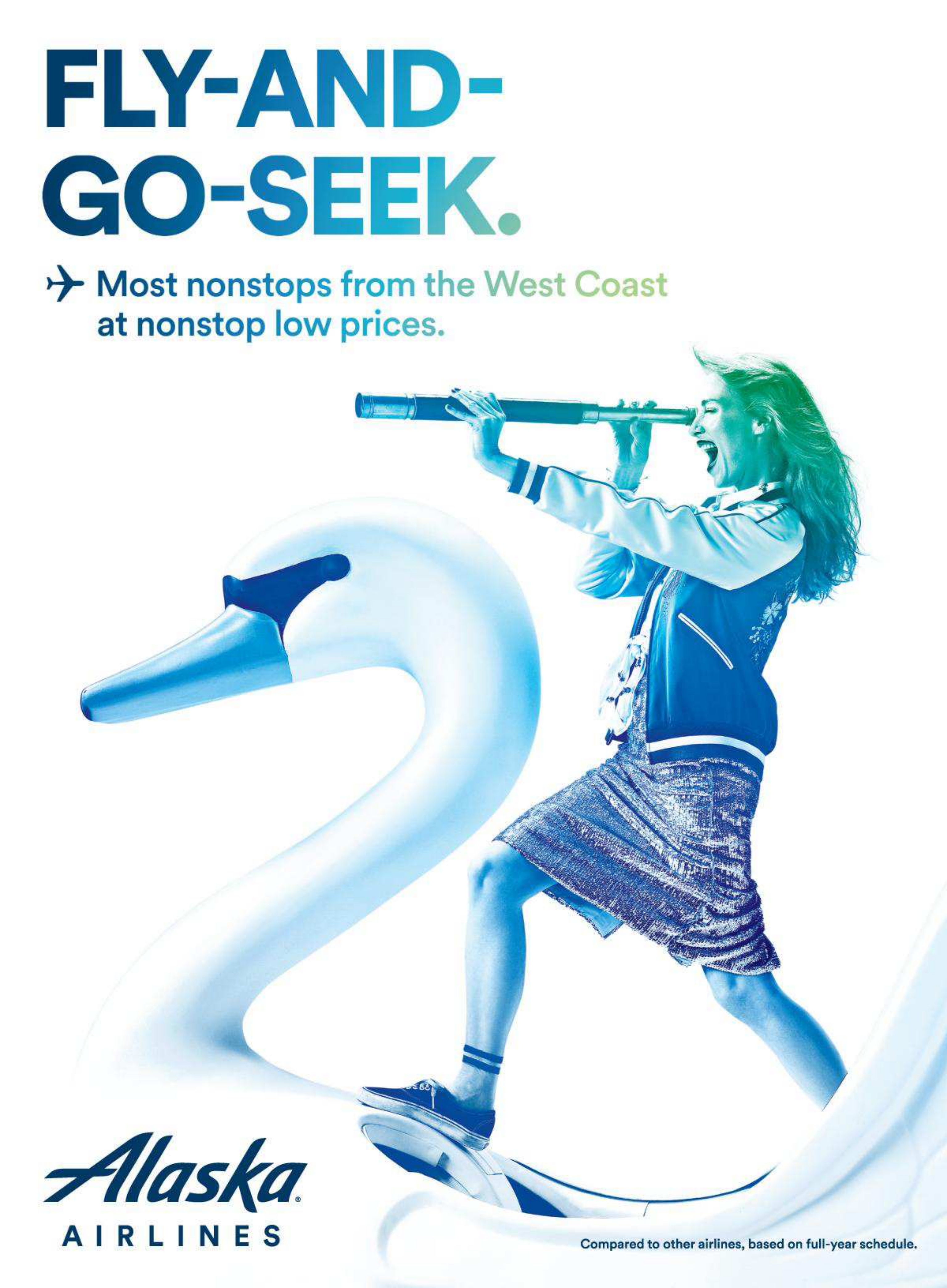
When I think about it, our desert fantasy couldn't have been more different from the mondo Italy extravaganza (page 80) that headlines our annual Travel Issue. And, to be honest, that type of trip is my usual kind of getaway—lots of iced-down wine, sprawling lunches, poolside drinks, friends at the grill. So much eating that I need a vacation from my vacation.

And that's what I got last June. As Simone and I packed up our crossover after five days in the desert, ready to blast our way back to Phoenix, I realized that this wound-up, high-speed New Yorker had finally slowed down. When your life is all about food, sometimes it's okay to step away from the table. ■

ADAM RAPOPORT
Editor in Chief

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The Guide

OUR TRAVEL TIPS, TRICKS, AND TOTALLY SUBJECTIVE ADVICE

TRAVEL SPECIAL



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX LAU

Rules of the Road

When we go on vacation, we bring back more than souvenirs. We return with a bit of wisdom. We learn that there's nothing wrong with planning a trip around croissants (see page 28). Or that, as you'll see here, some of our favorite sightseeing happens in the grocery store (page 30). So what else has our staff learned through the years? Keep reading.

1

DON'T LEAVE THE FRIDGE TOTALLY BARE

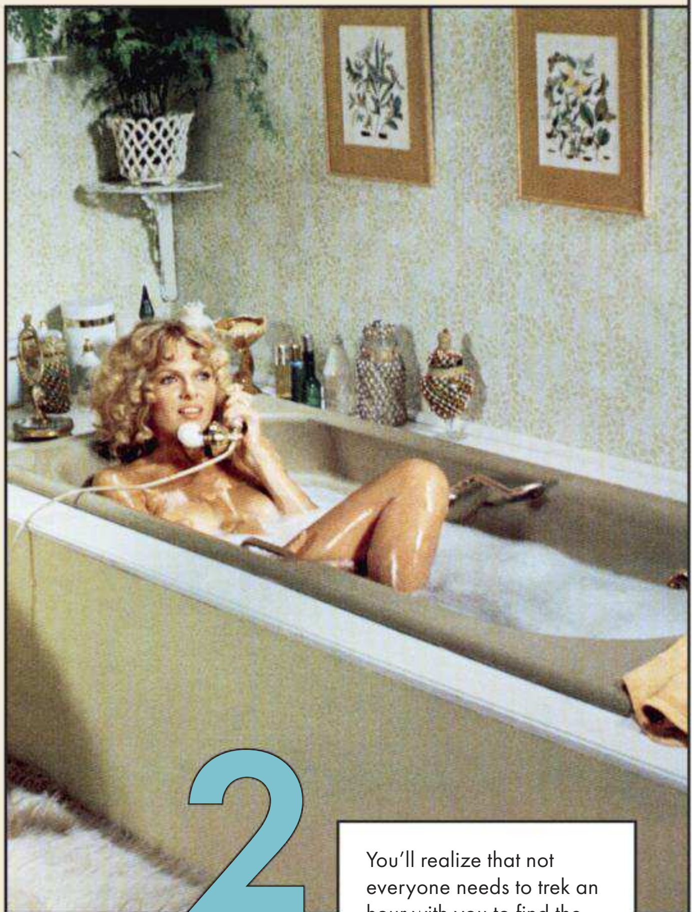
Passport, check. 3.4-oz bottles, check. Hunk of Parm in the fridge—wait, what? While I'm packing for vacation, I'm already planning dinner for the night I get home. That way, even if everything in my fridge has wilted while I was away, even if I land after my take-out spots have closed, I can still make *cacio e pepe*. Leave a hunk of Parm and/or Pecorino, spaghetti, black pepper, and butter. Then have a great vacation, knowing you can eat cheesy pasta minutes after you get home. Beats Sbarro in Arrivals, no? —TOMMY WERNER



DELEGATE!

If you're traveling with a group, split up the work, and play to everyone's strengths. Put your hyper-organized travel mate in charge of compiling flight info and Airbnb addresses. Ask your fashion friend to find the best local boutiques. If you're food-obsessed, reservations are on you.





2

Schedule Some Alone Time

As an introvert masquerading as an extrovert, I love to plan vacations with other people, then promptly find ways to escape. This doesn't always go over well with my companions, but over the years I've learned how to do it gracefully and with intention.

Even if you claim to never tire of your best friend's shopping habit or your boyfriend's slothlike pace, stealing time for yourself is the only way to sustain all the togetherness that travel entails. You'll fight less and be more willing to compromise. You'll be more patient with the picky eater and the friend who can't navigate and the husband who insists on seeing every room on every floor of the very crowded museum. You'll realize that not everyone needs to trek an hour with you to find the place the cabbie said has the best pizza in Rome.

How do you do it? I like to lie just a little. Say you have to find the perfect souvenir, or see the Flemish Masters exhibition, or check in with your very demanding job. Don't apologize. Pick a time to meet back up and make yourself scarce.

What are you supposed to do by yourself? Literally anything. The wonderful thing about travel is that the stuff that would be boring if you did it at home—wandering aimlessly, eating lunch, sitting on a park bench and staring into space—becomes novel when you're somewhere else. Break off from the pack or the partner for an hour and your experience will be richer, your encounters more unexpected, and your memories more vivid. And unless you spend your solo time at the Wi-Fi hot spot, you'll feel more present when you see their faces again. —AMANDA SHAPIRO

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Rethink Your Souvenirs

My toothbrush infatuation started in college on a trip to Paris. I'd stopped at a pharmacy along Place Saint-Germain-des-Prés for Tylenol when I noticed a case of boldly colored Bioseptyl brushes worthy of a place in the Centre Pompidou. I bought three. In Finland, I found a taxicab-yellow Hay Tann brush that rests, unused, like a statue, in a cup in my bathroom. A simple wood-handled binchotan charcoal toothbrush from Japan still reminds me of a walk through a cedar-built Shinto shrine in Kyoto. For me, toothbrushes bristle with place and uniqueness and remind me more of past trips than a magnet ever could.

—ANDREW KNOWLTON

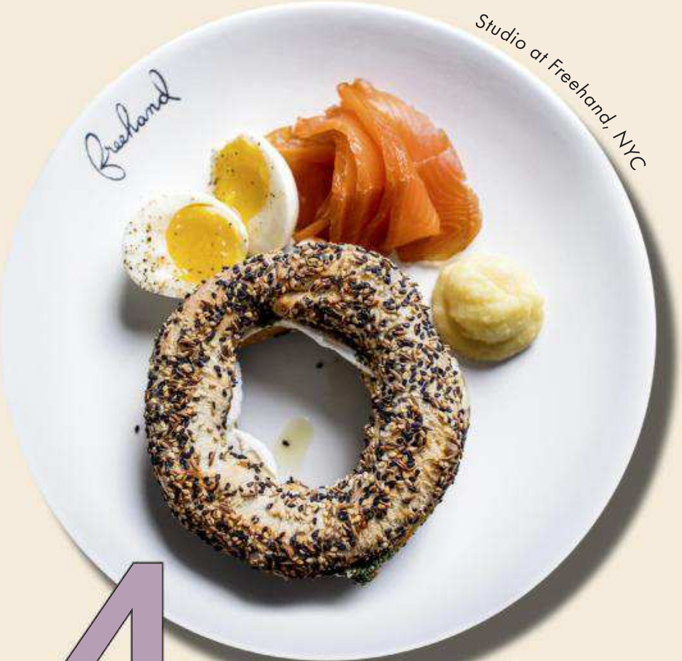


WALK BETWEEN DESTINATIONS

You're not going to stumble upon hidden gems if you're always heading from one place to another in an Uber. Walking gives you a better sense of almost any city—and, just as important, helps you work up an appetite for the charming tapas bar you just found.

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Studio at Freehand, NYC

4

IT'S OKAY TO DO NOTHING

▻ It's not possible to hit every place on your list. So don't even try. That desire to visit 30 different spots is also what makes you end vacation more tired than when you began. Which is why I always carve out do-nothing time. Maybe that means sleeping late, having a leisurely breakfast, and actually reading the books I schlepped. Or I'll have an early dinner at the one restaurant I *really* want to try, then head back to the hotel, rock the complimentary robe, and watch whatever awesomely bad movie happens to be on TV. Nothing says vacation like *She's All That*.

—CAREY POLIS



TRAVEL WITHOUT DATA

No amount of sunrise yoga or trips to the spa will give you the same sense of relaxation and mental quiet that disconnecting does. Commit to trying a couple days off the grid—or at least as long as it takes you to stop reflexively reaching for your phone.

5

Break a Sweat

▻ Eat, drink, sleep, repeat. It's fun, until it gets exhausting. Which is why we love a good travel workout:

AAPTIV

I'm obsessed with the Aaptiv app—audio workouts with trainers and music. I use it at my local gym, but it's my savior when I travel and don't know what equipment, if any, I'll have access to. My favorite workouts are spinning with Kelly (can be accomplished on stationary bikes from the '80s in the hotel basement), but I've done yoga with Amanda on Swiffered Airbnb floors and a nine-minute ab burn with Sultan in my brother's guest room too. —ALEX BEGGS

GO FOR A RUN

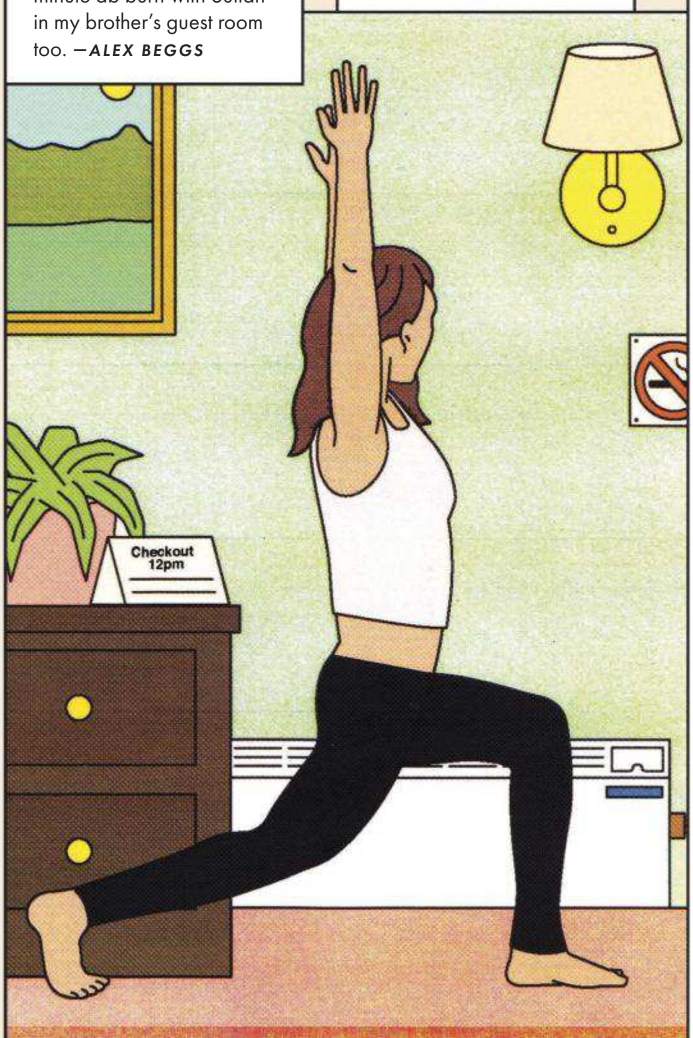
Running gets me outside, head on a swivel, taking in the architecture and energy of a place. I like to plan my runs in advance, but there's only so much you can glean ahead of time, so I make a point to stop in a local run shop to get advice about recommended routes (as well as places to get a post-run coffee or snack).

—CLAIRE SAFFITZ

THE SEVEN-MINUTE WORKOUT

Hotel gyms are depressing AF. So I hide in my room with the Seven-Minute Workout, which targets all the major muscle groups using no more than a chair and a wall. There's an app, but it's blah, so instead I bookmarked the *Scientific 7-Minute Workout* video on YouTube, which has much cooler music and animation.

—CHRISTINE MUHLKE



PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC MEDSKER





Make Yourself a Regular

Even if it's just for a few days

IT WAS THE FIRST ON THE PAGES-LONG list of recommendations we took with us to Oaxaca City: "three ladies underneath a canvas tarp at the corner of Jesús Carranza and Calle de Manuel García Vigil." One woman took orders; another grabbed handfuls of freshly made masa dough, pressed them into thick disks, and slapped them onto the surface of a charcoal-heated clay *comal;* and the third tended to the tortillas as they got speckled with char, flipping and topping them with spoonfuls of lard, beans, fresh cheese, and toppings ranging from ruddy-colored chorizo crumbles to pork-stuffed poblano chiles, wild mushrooms to strips of fresh green cactus.

After our first bites—the blistered corn dough fresher and earthier and more complex than anything we had ever tasted back in the States—we looked at each other and immediately understood that there were a lot of places on that pages-long list that we weren't going to get to.

We make such a big deal about *breadth* when traveling, the sheer *number* of restaurants we're able to geotag from, that we sometimes forget about *depth*. But grabbing a different pastry from the same bakery every morning, or sipping espresso on a bench outside of one coffee shop every afternoon, or becoming a regular at a friendly local bar, even if it's just for a week, can be more meaningful than—and just as satisfying as—hitting all the "must-trys" on so-and-so's Best Of list.

We visited the Three Ladies every single day of that trip, very much at the expense of the countless other taquerias and mezcal bars and mole joints that were on our list. But the thing is, when I look back on that vacation, I never find myself waxing regretful about all the places that we could have tried. I just remember the smiles on our new friends' faces when the Americans came back for a *fifth* time—and every perfect bite of all those tacos, *memelas,* and empanadas. —*AMIEL STANEK*

Grabbing a different pastry from the same bakery every morning or sipping espresso on a bench outside of one coffee shop every afternoon can be more meaningful than hitting all the "must-trys" on so-and-so's Best Of list.

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TAKE A TRIP TO THESE UNEXPECTEDLY AWESOME WINE COUNTRIES

- *Austria*
- *Czech Republic*
- *Georgia*
- *Greece*
- *Mexico*
- *Slovakia*

7

Skip What You Know, Drink Local

Marissa A. Ross wants you to go outside your comfort zone

Sorry, Dorothy, but you're not in your supermarket's wine aisle anymore. You're halfway around the world, and you didn't travel this far to drink the same wines you keep in your fridge back home. Instead of flipping through the wine list for something familiar when traveling internationally, throw caution to the wind and ask for a local wine. This is easy when you're in Burgundy and know your way around some Pinot, but you should also do it when it's not easy, like when you're in the Czech countryside and you don't know any of the producers, you don't know any of the grapes, and you definitely don't know how to pronounce any of it.

These local wines are often small-production gems that people in the States haven't even heard of (outside of the conversations you're going to have about how you discovered the best wines of your life in some random village). And beyond exposing you to exciting unknown bottles, native wines also give you insight into the land, the culture, and the cuisine with every sip. "Terroir" may feel like an abstract thing from your couch, but it's tangible when you can taste the landscape you drove through that day. And the golden pairing rule of "where it grows, it goes" is golden for a reason: The regional wines go with the regional food, and no matter what excuse you gave your partner for this vacation, we both know you're there for the food. Be there for the wine too. Because there's nothing better than exploring a place through taste.


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8

Not All Group Tours Are Lame

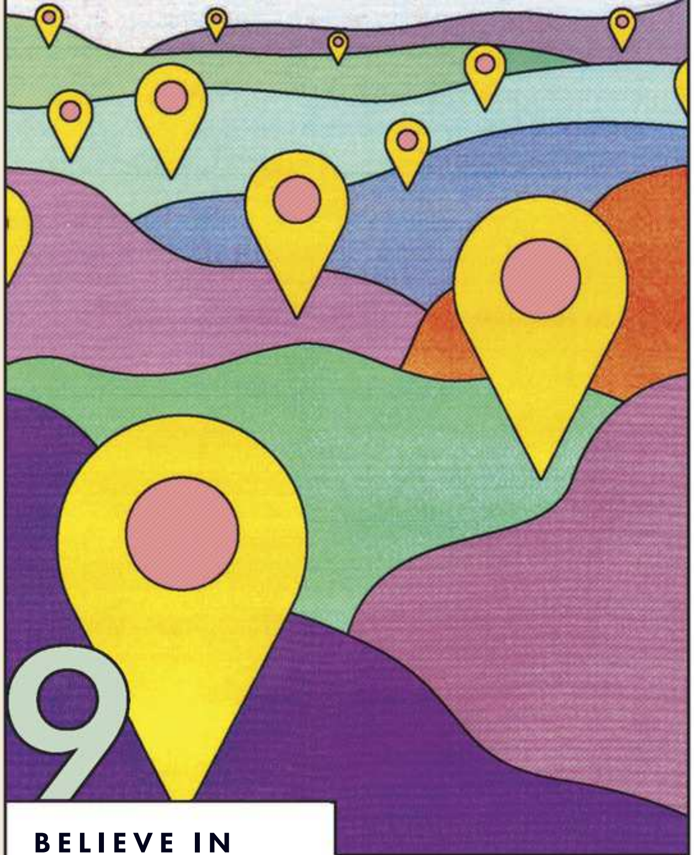
▻ I used to think I was too good a traveler for tour groups. But after weaving around Hoi An, Vietnam, on Vespas with Vespa Adventures (vespaadventures.com), I realized that people who do this for a living know better than I do and can offer access to places I would never stumble across on my own. Through its Countryside and Islands Explorers tour, I met local mat weavers, shipbuilders, and rice-cracker makers, then ate lunch at an unnamed beach restaurant that served sweet, briny clams with scallions and chiles. And because it was a *small* group tour—this is key! I like to keep it to fewer than eight—we didn't cause a scene everywhere we went. And we definitely didn't have to wear matching oversize T-shirts. —C.P.





UPDATE YOUR ITINERARY

As soon as you get home (or mid-vacation if you're feeling really ambitious), write down all the highlights—restaurants, shops, hikes—that weren't on your original itinerary. You can't send your friends to the cool Korean bakery you discovered in Santa Fe if you forget about it.



9

BELIEVE IN GOOGLE MAPS

▻ It's hard to remember the days when I traveled with a manila folder packed with printouts and a clumsily folded map. Now I use Google Maps to plot my daily itinerary for maximum efficiency. It helps me plan the best routes—I can see which places are near each other—and clicking on each pin provides opening hours and other key info. You can use different colors for each type of place (hotel, coffee, etc.) or create layers for each day. Most important, I save it offline so that I don't have to use precious data roaming. And later, when friends ask me where to go for, say, pastries in Austin, I just send them a link. —C.M.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN MAP

- *Go to maps.google .com. In the menu, click Your Places.*
- *Click Maps, then Create Map.*
- *Search the spot you have in mind, then click Add to Map. If you'd like, click the style icon to color-code the pin.*
- *Repeat as necessary.*
- *Name your map.*
- *To access it offline, open your phone's Google Maps app, and when you're still on Wi-Fi, click Your Places in the menu. Hit Maps, then select your desired map. In the menu, go to Offline Maps, click Custom Map, and your map will appear. Hit Download.*

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Taos Pueblo, New Mexico @catsthatattack; Du Pain et des Idées, Paris @emilyeisen; Caló des Moro, Majorca, Spain @elle_jaime





Santa Teresa, Costa Rica @lallimusic; New Kowloon, Hong Kong @yungbludlau; Satan's Coffee Corner, Barcelona @nicole_franzen





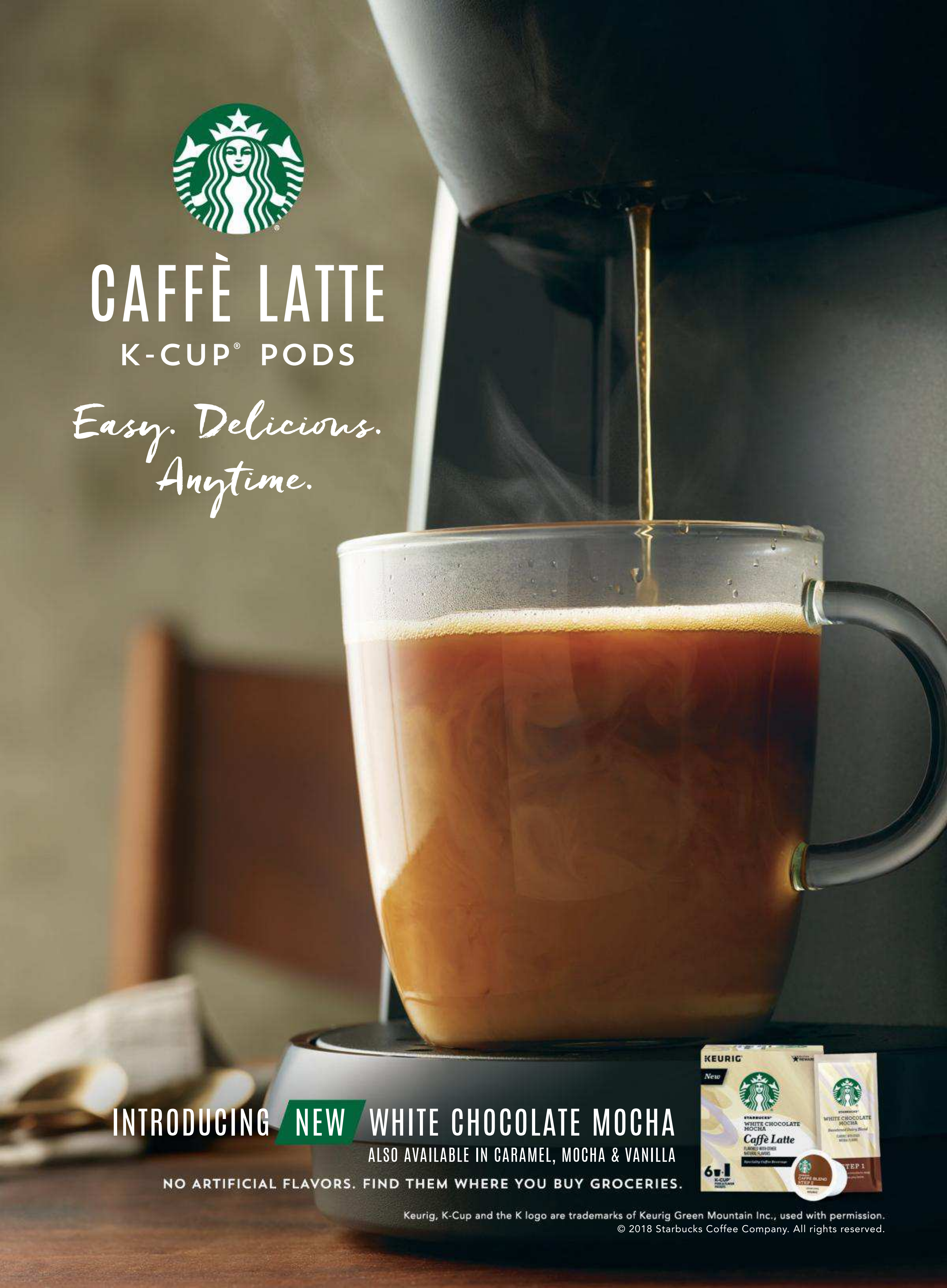
Colima, Mexico @piariverola; Octopus drying in Oia, Greece @emmafishman; Antelope Canyon, Arizona @merylrothstein

10

INSTAGRAM IS THE ULTIMATE VACATION PLANNER

The first thing I do after buying a plane ticket is hop on Instagram—not to fantasize but to find recommendations. I'm on the hunt for those 'grammers who post the kinds of photos that inspire spontaneous airfare purchases (people other than me might call them influencers). They may be compensated to publicly promote specific places, but I've found them to be surprisingly real behind the shield of direct message. (How to find them? Search the destination under Tags and scroll until you find something breathtaking.) I found out about the incredible Hörgshlíðarlaug hot springs in Iceland from @thenycelander, an NYC transplant in Reykjavik. I added kayaking in an Alaskan glacial lake to my bucket list thanks to photographer @alexstrohl. A DM on how much you like their work and how you'd love to hear about their favorite spots in (insert destination here) could lead to the highlight of your trip. —*ERIKA OWEN*

PHOTOGRAPHS: KRISTIN EDDINGTON (PUEBLO); EMILY EISEN (PASTRY); ELIZABETH JAIME (CALÓ DES MARO); CARLA LALLI MUSIC (SANTA TERESA); ALEX LAU (HONG KONG); NICOLE FRANZEN (BARCELONA); PIA RIVEROLA (PALM); EMMA FISHMAN (OCTOPUS); MERYL ROTHSTEIN (ARIZONA)


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Tartine's beloved croissants

Build Your Trip Around Croissants

The case for letting pastries shape your itinerary

I WENT TO SAN FRANCISCO in 2013 with my then ten-year-old son Leo to eat, no qualms about it. I could no longer resist the constant stream of media fanfare about the "scene." There were local culinary heroes (Danny Bowien; Stuart Brioza and Nicole Krasinski), destination-worthy neighborhood spots (Outerlands), third-wave coffee beaneries (Sightglass, Ritual), and the bakeries. So. Many. Bakeries. At the time, the city was even becoming famous for its toast. Toast!

Our first stop was the mecca of Tartine Bakery in the Mission, where jet lag got us there before a line had formed. We picked out the famous morning bun, a ham-and-cheese croissant (the pain au jambon), and a chocolate croissant. Also a quiche and some still-warm brioche bread pudding, because you just never know! The bun certainly lived up to the hype, but Leo deemed the pain au jambon the "winner," and on the spot the two of us decided to compare it with every other ham-and-cheese croissant we encountered over the next five days.

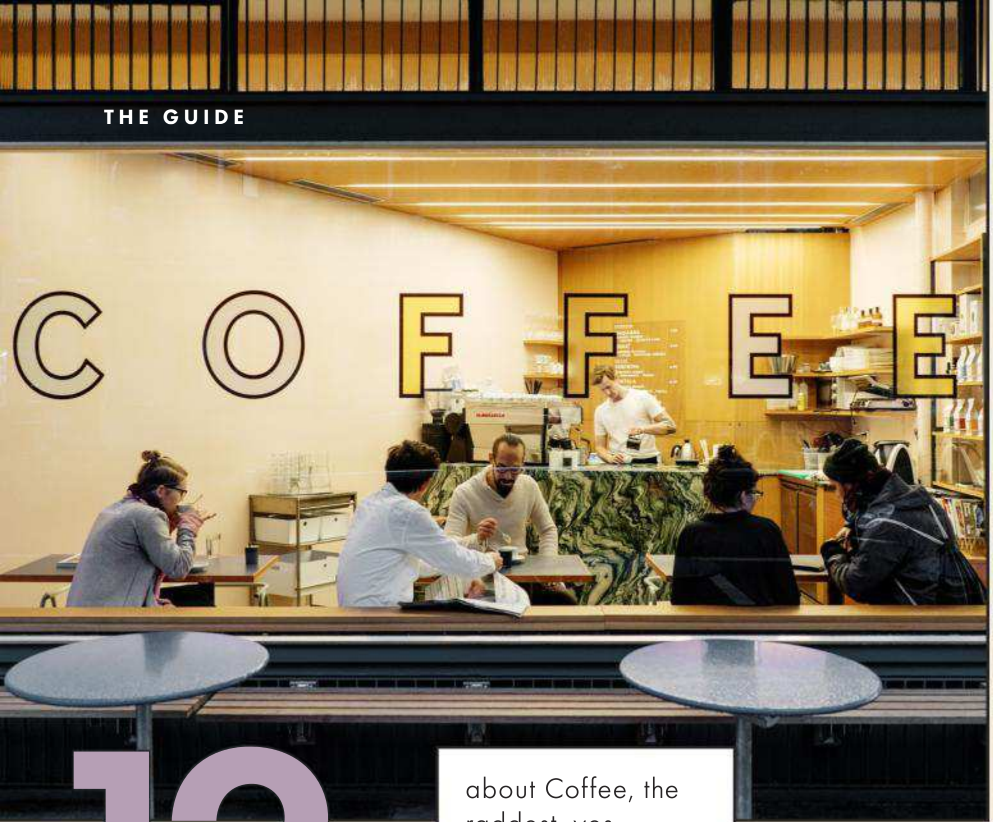
Our mission gave our days structure, and we stuck to a steady food-culture-culture-food rhythm, heading out with intention and then converting our high-fat, high-carb diet into spontaneous detours. On the way to Craftsman and Wolves, where the ham-and-cheese was a solid B+, we wandered into a cool taxidermy and artifacts store. We followed B. Patisserie's spectacular *kouign-amann* with a long walk to Golden Gate Park, descending from hot and sunny San Francisco spring weather to cold, wet, and windy San Francisco spring weather.

There were no pins on my Google map for the moments I remember most clearly: the night we stayed in and read graphic novels because we were too full for dinner; the albino alligator at the California Academy of Sciences; Leo jumping the dunes at Ocean Beach; chatting with strangers in line at Swan Oyster Depot; walking the hairpin turns on Lombard Street. We needed a point A and a point B—and the next croissant was as good a destination as any—but the trip ended up being about everything that happened in between. —*CARLA LALLI MUSIC*

Our mission gave our days structure, and we stuck to a steady food-culture-culture-food rhythm, heading out with intention and then converting our high-fat, high-carb diet into spontaneous detours.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AUBRIE PICK


Buitoni
WHO WORE IT BEST?
TORTELLINI
with pesto
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with pesto
FRESH IS ALWAYS IN STYLE
Buitoni freshly made pasta and sauce available
in your grocer's refrigerated aisle.
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INGREDIENTS



The creatively named Coffee shop in Zurich.

12

Plan an Unplanned Day

I'm not the same person on the last day of vacation as I was on the first. I know more—I've walked by cool-looking shops and bars, I've gotten locals' tips on neighborhoods and restaurants worth checking out. So I always leave the final day of my trip open to explore the places I didn't know about back when I was planning my itinerary.

Last summer, a friend who saw I was in Zurich gave me a heads-up about Coffee, the raddest, yes, coffee shop in town. And thanks to an Instagram message from a local writer, I walked through the city's red-light district (with totally wholesome intentions). I sat at a wicker sidewalk two-top at Bar 63 for a pint of Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes saison. After noticing two chefs planning the night's menu earlier in the day, I decided to end my night at Gamper Restaurant with bottles of Swiss natural wine, charcoal-grilled lamb, and (easily) the best meal of my trip. None of this was on my agenda, but that's what you get when you don't plan a thing.

—ALEX DELANY

13

Hit Up the Grocery Store

If you sent 20 members of the *Bon Appétit* staff to different destinations around the globe, it wouldn't matter if one was in Tel Aviv, one in Montevideo, and another in Chengdu, we'd all end up at the same place: the supermarket. It's our own brand of culinary anthropology. Want to really know what makes a country's belly growl? Take a spin up and down the aisles and you'll find out that Norway has a thing for brown cheese, Portugal will put any creature under the sea in a can, and in Thailand there seems to be a different style of fish sauce for every dish. Supermarkets offer a window into locals' day-to-day lives—something even the best museums and monuments simply can't.

—A.K.



PHOTOGRAPHS: PASCAL GROB (COFFEE); ALEX LAU (LEONE)

CONTINUES ON PAGE 35



1988.
The retirement plan began over two cups of black coffee. Not by coincidence, it was toasted with a 30-year-old single malt in
2018.

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14

Rethink the First-Aid Kit

▻ Nothing has the ability to compromise an adventure like immune-system failure. I'm kind of a nut when it comes to supplements (my nickname is the Healer Dealer!), so I always pack preemptive and reactive strategies to block any bad vibes. Here's what's in my carry-on.

—NANCY JO IACOI



Never thought that "fresh fermented fruit" would become a member of our traveling doctor's kit

PAPAW OINTMENT

I was introduced to this wonder in Australia. It's made from papayas, and it's good for seemingly everything: mosquito bites, sunburns, cuts, and more. (Lucas' Papaw ointment, $10; *amazon.com*)

GARLIC PILLS

To keep my immune system strong and prevent stomach bugs, I take a daily capsule beginning two weeks before the trip and continue to do so until I get home. (Garlic capsules, $18; *eclecticherb.com*)

GRAPEFRUIT-SEED EXTRACT

I use a few drops in my drinking water to kill bacteria. This stuff is strong—follow package directions! (Grapefruit-seed extract, $16; *nutribiotic.com*)

PROBIOTICS

I figure foreign food will have foreign bacteria, so I take friendly bacteria to keep my gut happy. (Dr. Tobias Probiotics Deep Immune, $24; *amazon.com*)

ELECTROLYTES

Tastes like Kool-Aid but with no sugar. I add the individual packets to my water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day. (Ultima Replenisher, $20; *amazon.com*)

SOOTHING DIGESTION

This has two simple ingredients: slippery elm bark and licorice root. I take it with meals to keep things moving. (Soothing Digestion Formula, $32; *drchristophers herbshop.com*)



BE A TEETOTALER (JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE)

Don't drink alcohol on an overnight flight or on the first day of a trip that takes you across multiple time zones. Yes, it takes superhero powers to refrain from a Campari and soda on the afternoon of your arrival in Milan, but if you do, you'll give your body the strength to fight jet lag on its own.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX LAU



Mary Poppins took her wards on magical adventures. Alex Beggs' ward took her to Delhi.

Be a Nanny, See the World

In praise of the unexpectedly globe-trotting gig

ALL THAT MATTERS IN NANNYING is that you're not wanted by the FBI and that the kid likes you. I couldn't cook, speak French, or drive. But I could play Sorry! for hours, embellish bedtime stories, use a microwave, and create an imaginary drive-through McDonald's in the bathtub. Which is how I became less Henry's babysitter and more his well-paid, kind-of-weird big sister.

My parents had dropped me off at NYU with $100 on a debit card, wished me luck, and flew home to Houston. Through a rich friend of a rich friend, I got hooked up with the best babysitting gig in New York. Parents who were loving, funny, and generous, and a five-year-old boy with a passion for pizza and the AirTrain at JFK. Together we traveled the New York subway—and then the world.

Somehow they got invited by rich friends to join *their* vacations, and so I got invited to be the nanny who stayed on the yacht to swim in the pool with the kid instead of visiting boring museums. (Yes, the yacht had a pool. And a chef who made us sushi with chicken in it.)

In Saint Petersburg, the Galápagos, Paris, and Delhi, Henry ate a bland variety of buttered pasta, scrambled eggs, rice, croissants, naan, and sometimes naan filled with rice. There was no way he'd budge to try a bite of my dal, which was the first time I'd ever had lentils to my knowledge. While Henry played with the automatic door of the bathroom in the Jules Verne (le sigh, the restaurant atop the Eiffel Tower), I ate a Michelin-starred meal in a T-shirt and jeans.

Wherever we traveled, I'd haul a snack bag filled with fruit leathers, Goldfish, peanut butter pretzels, and Luna bars that was as important as my passport. Henry's world remained familiar and covered in cheese powder while mine opened up. With him by my side—except for that time I lost him in Guayaquil, Ecuador, for five minutes (we found him in a pirate-ship-themed bar)—I saw more of the world than I ever would have in my life before or after. I started to suspect his parents brought me along because they knew this too.

So what lesson can you glean from all this? It's nice work if you can get it, traveling the world and getting paid to watch cartoons in hotel beds. But everybody grows up, and memories blur into one long bumpy descent onto the tarmac, so make sure to take a notebook. Oh, and that snack bag. —**A.B.**

With Henry by my side—except for that time I lost him in Guayaquil, Ecuador—
I saw more of the world than I ever would have in my life before or after.

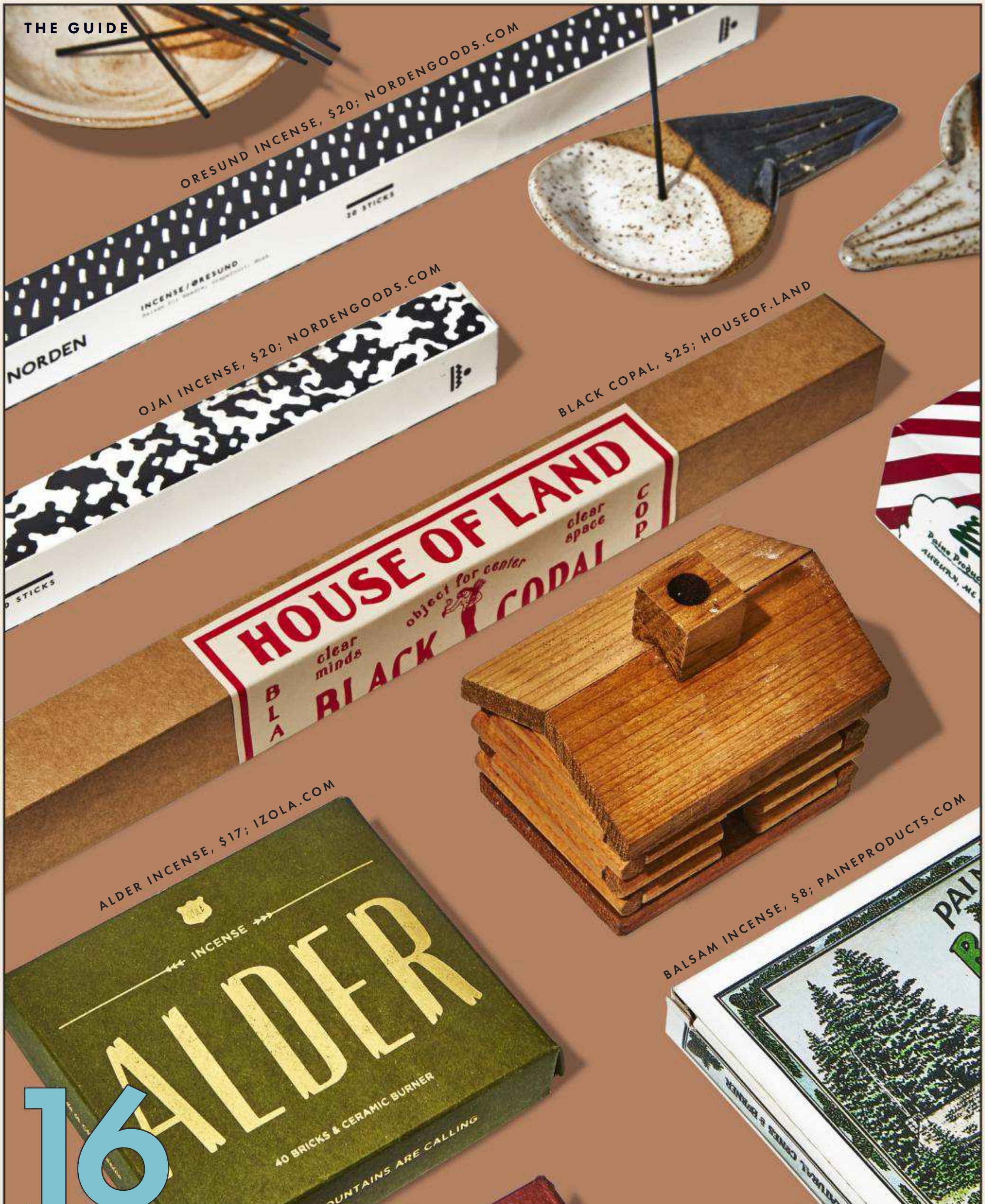


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16

Always Pack Some Incense

▻ If you travel enough, three things will happen at some point: Your flight will be inexplicably, infuriatingly canceled; you will eat something at an airport you will never forgive yourself for; and you will stay in a hotel that, let's just say, doesn't vibe with your sense of smell. I can't help you with the first two, but for the latter, there's a reason that I always travel with incense. No, I'm not talking about the overly smoky, fake patchouli-scented sticks your college roommate burned during her Phish phase but rather the subtle, almost candle-like scent from smaller incense that I burn in my home after frying chicken or sautéing salmon. And if it can rid my apartment of that fishy smell, even the worst hotel room doesn't stand a chance. —A.K.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX LAU. ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE WYLESOL. FOR RESTAURANT DETAILS, SEE SOURCEBOOK.

MAKING ROOM FOR INSPIRATION AND CREATIVITY IN YOUR LIFE



Former Glamour Editor in Chief Cindi Leive appreciates a serene writing space in her Brooklyn home.

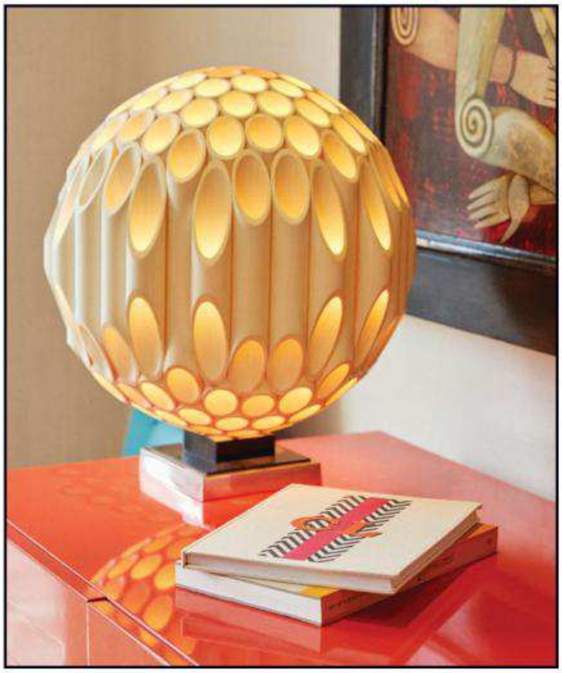
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL GENTLE

CLEAR SPACE, CLEAR MIND

by Cindi Leive
Former Editor in Chief, Glamour



For Leive, a tidy table in a quiet space helps jump-start productivity.



Leive's favorite writing nook is free of any distracting clutter.

YOU KNOW THOSE PEOPLE YOU SEE HUNCHED OVER IN THE CORNERS OF COFFEE SHOPS OR AIRPORT LOUNGES, oblivious to the world outside? I find them—and their laser focus—inspiring. Just the idea that you could write the Great American Novel (or business plan) while the cappuccino machine roars three feet from your head and a toddler angrily throws biscotti at her harried father next to you feels like a testament to the human capacity for getting things done. Those people are amazing!

But I am not one of those people. I've always craved a more peaceful place to work. When I was eight years old, I remember marching irately to the front of my third-grade classroom and demanding that Mrs. Horner silence the din raging around us so I could finish my writing assignment. "You'll just have to figure out how to live with the noise," she said. Her point was clear: The world was loud (and messy!), and I needed to adapt.

Gradually, I did—by finding oases of quiet, clean and calm wherever I could. As a teenager, the early-morning hours were my friend: I could get more done in the still minutes before the sun rose than I could in an entire afternoon of studying with friends. In college, I loved my loud dorm, but when I needed to work, I fled to one specific, tidy carrel on the second floor of the library, where no one made a peep and perfect sunlight streamed through the window. And early in my career as a journalist, the bustle of a newsroom was great for spitballing with colleagues, but what I most needed to write was a weekend or evening when I could clear the kitchen table and be alone with my words.

I used to be faintly embarrassed about my need for a well-organized, clean workspace to get things done—we live in the age of open offices and bustling co-working environments and, yes, coffee-shop novelists. But the truth is that my best work is still done either in forced-quiet zones like airplanes, or in my home when the noise of two kids and three pets has stilled and I can just...think. Virginia Woolf famously observed that in order to write, a woman must have a room of her own. A room is nice, but for me a dining room table or comfy couch will do—as long as the space is clear, the phone's on silent and the dog's asleep.

Mrs. Horner was right. The world is noisy and messy. I'm happy to report that I've learned to adapt. ●

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL GENTLE









COOKING UP CREATIVITY

Ellen Bennett is the founder of Hedley & Bennett, a collection of high-quality chef gear and accessories. She explains how a clean kitchen can help you cook up great things.

I USED TO BE A LINE COOK AT A TWO MICHELIN-STAR RESTAURANT IN LOS ANGELES. In the kitchen, everything had to be perfect and in its proper place. You'd open the drawers and all of the mise en place was labeled, everything had a home. So much thought and care was being put into producing this beautiful food, but the people making it (myself included) looked pretty shoddy. I quickly realized, because we didn't feel good in our uniforms, we didn't have pride in the food we were making. I wanted to fix that.

When you wear a clean outfit you feel confident in, you hold your head up higher. I wanted to make aprons that gave people the same empowered feeling. I wanted people to feel awesome. I thought if I could make people feel the same sense of empowerment in the kitchen, I could change something deeper in the culinary world than just uniforms.

You don't have to be a professional chef to dress and act like one. I cook at home all the time, and the very first thing I do is ready my "station," as they say in restaurants. When you start by cleaning your work space, setting up your tools, laying out your ingredients, and getting yourself ready, you're making the space for creativity.

A clean kitchen to me is what a blank white canvas is to an artist. When I have everything clean before diving into the meal, I can fully focus on the preparation, and the food is that much better.

Once you start cooking, allow yourself to get messy! It's totally OK and part of the fun. There are few things I love more than being in my kitchen and having six different things going on the stovetop. I'm simultaneously cutting up a loaf of bread, making sure my guests have drinks in hand, and then I pop back to my stove and make sure everything is humming along. Finally, when the meal is ready, I set the table and gather whoever is in attendance. Whether in a restaurant or in your own home, the feeling of bringing that completed meal to the table is a darn good one. Bon appétit. ●

By Ellen Bennett

▸ ASK ALEXA HOW TO ACHIEVE A CLEAN SLATE IN YOUR HOME. **SAY, "HEY ALEXA, GIVE ME A CLOROX CLEAN TIP"** TO YOUR AMAZON SMART HOME DEVICE FOR ADDITIONAL TIPS FROM CLOROX.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL GENTLE


Clean
is the beginning.
CLOROX
What comes next is everything.



The Season

THE SPRING INGREDIENTS WORTH FLYING FOR

TRAVEL SPECIAL

Finally: Spring!

Candy-like sugar snap peas piled high in a fresh raw salad. Ramps battered and fried into light and airy fritters. The produce this time of year is so fresh and pristine, we'd jump on a plane for it. But where to go? We ask chefs who actually travel for the good stuff.

recipes by
CLAIRE SAFFITZ

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX LAU

OH, SNAP PEA!

"In 2012 I had dinner at the Willows Inn on Lummi Island, Washington. Afterward, chef Blaine Wetzel snuck us into the gardens late at night, and we started walking around with a flashlight and tasting things. **I had the most incredible sugar snap peas I've ever eaten**, with the most tender and sweet blossoms." —DAN KLUGER, *Loring Place, NYC*



SUGAR SNAP PEA SALAD

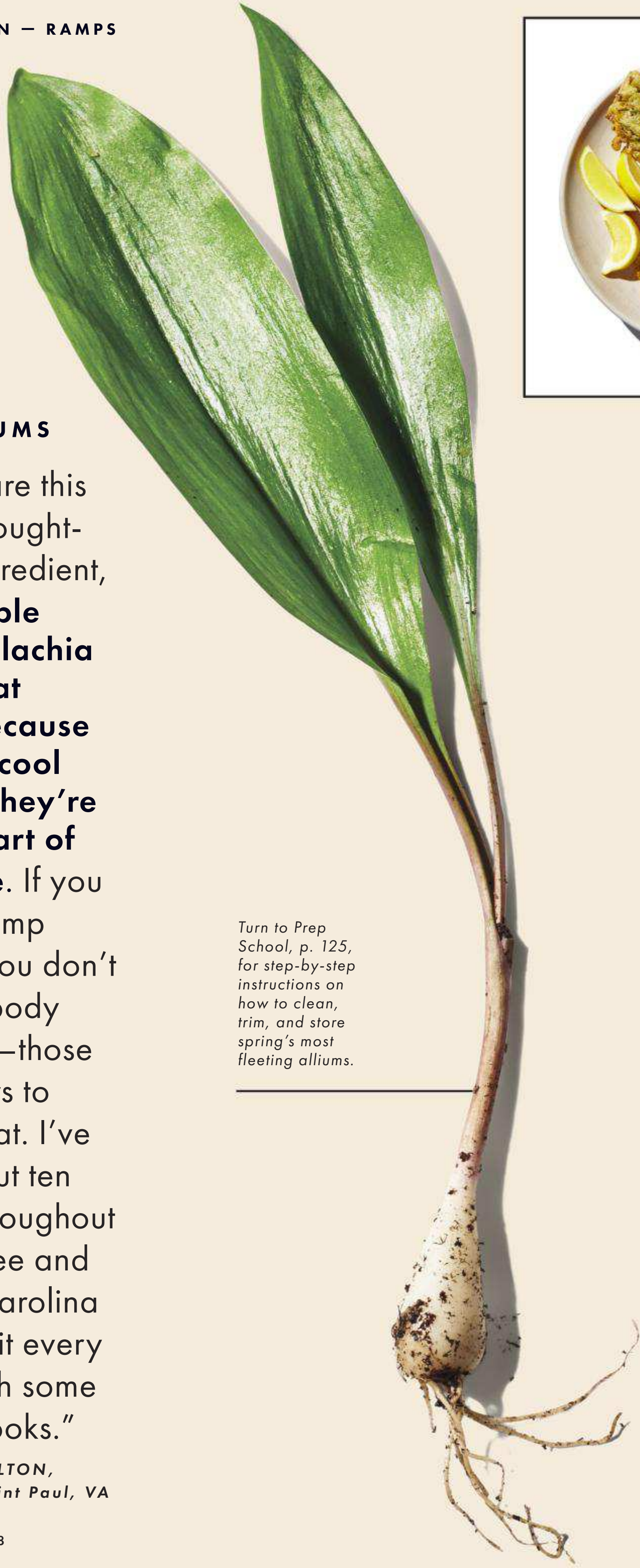
Whisk ¾ **cup buttermilk**, **3 Tbsp. plain whole-milk Greek yogurt**, **2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice**, **1 finely grated small garlic clove**, and a **large pinch of kosher salt** in a medium bowl. Toss **8 oz. sugar snap peas, strings removed, thinly sliced**, **2 Tbsp. olive oil**, and **1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest** in another medium bowl; season with **flaky sea salt** and **pepper**. Pour dressing into a shallow bowl and pile peas in the center. Drizzle with more oil and top with more pepper and lemon zest. *4 servings*

If you can find them, use tender first-of-the-year peas in this raw salad; they can get starchy and tough later in the season.





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A+ ALLIUMS

"Ramps are this highly sought-after ingredient, but **people in Appalachia don't eat them because they're cool or hip; they're just a part of life here**. If you find a ramp patch, you don't tell anybody about it—those are yours to sell or eat. I've got about ten spots throughout Tennessee and North Carolina that I visit every year with some of my cooks."

—TRAVIS MILTON, Milton's, Saint Paul, VA

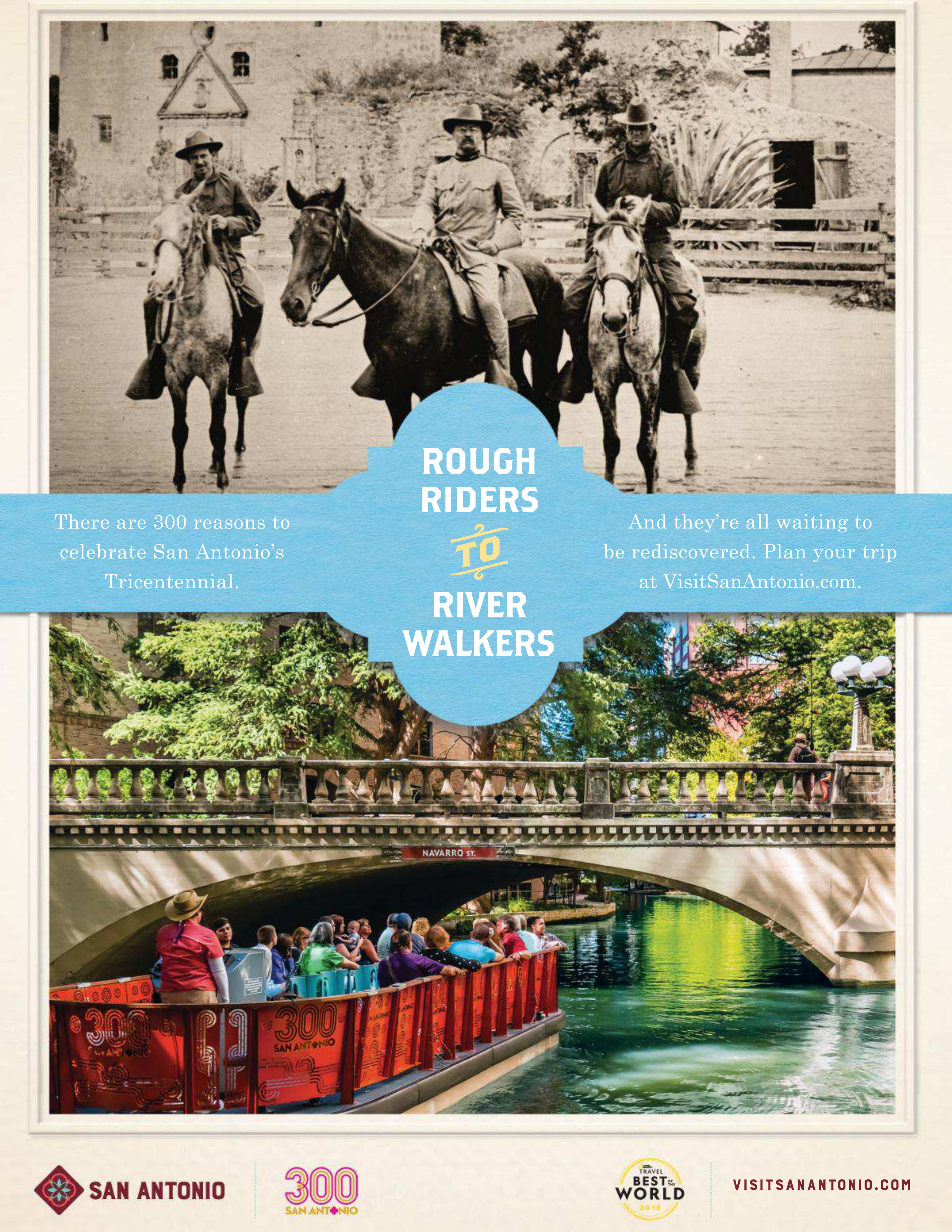
Turn to Prep School, p. 125, for step-by-step instructions on how to clean, trim, and store spring's most fleeting alliums.

RAMP FRITTERS

Whisk **1 cup all-purpose flour**, **¾ cup rice flour**, **1 tsp. baking powder**, **1 tsp. sugar**, and **1 tsp. kosher salt** in a large bowl. Make a well in the center and pour in **¾ cup club soda** and **¾ cup light beer**; whisk until smooth. Fold in **10 oz. ramps, cut into 1" pieces (about 5 cups)**. Pour **vegetable oil (about 6 cups)** into a large cast-iron skillet fitted with a deep-fry thermometer to come 1" up sides and heat over medium-high until thermometer registers 350°. Working in batches, place ¼-cup mounds of batter in skillet; press down lightly to flatten and submerge. Fry, turning once, until fritters are golden brown, about 4 minutes total. Transfer to paper towels to drain; season with salt. Serve with **lemon wedges** for squeezing over.

Makes about 20

PHOTOGRAPH BY TED CAVANAUGH


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TICKLED PINK

"Ever since I moved to London in 2004, I've been obsessed with 'forced' rhubarb, which is **grown in sheds completely in the dark and harvested by candlelight** so the stalks never have a chance to turn green and instead become a gorgeous hot pink. People go crazy for it here."

—CLAIRE PTAK, Violet Bakery, London

RHUBARB CUSTARD CAKE

Butter and flour a 9"-diameter springform pan. Whisk **1 cup all-purpose flour**, **¾ tsp. baking powder**, and **½ tsp. kosher salt** in a medium bowl. Whisk **2 large eggs**, **1 large egg yolk**, and **1½ cups sugar** in a large bowl until very pale and thick, about 1 minute. Whisk in **4 Tbsp. melted unsalted butter**, **¼ cup sour cream**, **2 Tbsp. dark rum**, and **2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**. Add dry ingredients and fold until smooth; scrape into prepared pan. Arrange **12 oz. rhubarb stalks** over batter, trimming as needed to fit. Sprinkle cake with sugar and bake in a 350° oven until golden brown, 45–55 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let cake cool 10 minutes. Slide a knife around sides to loosen; unmold. Slide cake onto rack and let finish cooling.

DO AHEAD: Cake can be baked 1 day ahead. Store tightly wrapped at room temperature.

8 servings



The inside of this cake is gooey in a good way, like the center of a chewy macaroon.




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THE FINEST STALKS

"A few years ago I was in a tiny town called Ostuni, working on a cookbook about the food of Italy's Puglia region. We met a local forager who showed us how to pick wild asparagus, which is long, thin, and spindly. **For the rest of the trip, it was our little treat at the end of the day.** We'd boil and dress the stalks with lemon and a bit of oil and eat them with supper, rationing them out among all of our plates."

—ANNA JONES, author, A Modern Way to Cook



BLISTERED ASPARAGUS

Heat **2 Tbsp. vegetable oil** in a large skillet over medium-high. Cook **12 oz. asparagus, trimmed**, tossing often, until bright green, blistered in spots, and tender, about 5 minutes. Season with **salt** and transfer to a plate. Remove seeds from **1 Fresno chile** and finely chop. Stir chile, **2 Tbsp. soy sauce**, **1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice**, **1 tsp. honey**, **1 tsp. toasted sesame oil**, and **1 tsp. finely grated peeled ginger** in a small bowl. Mix in **2 Tbsp. crushed salted, dry-roasted peanuts** and **2 Tbsp. toasted unsweetened shredded coconut** and spoon over asparagus. *4 servings*



If your asparagus has very thick stalks, peel the bottom third after snapping off the ends.

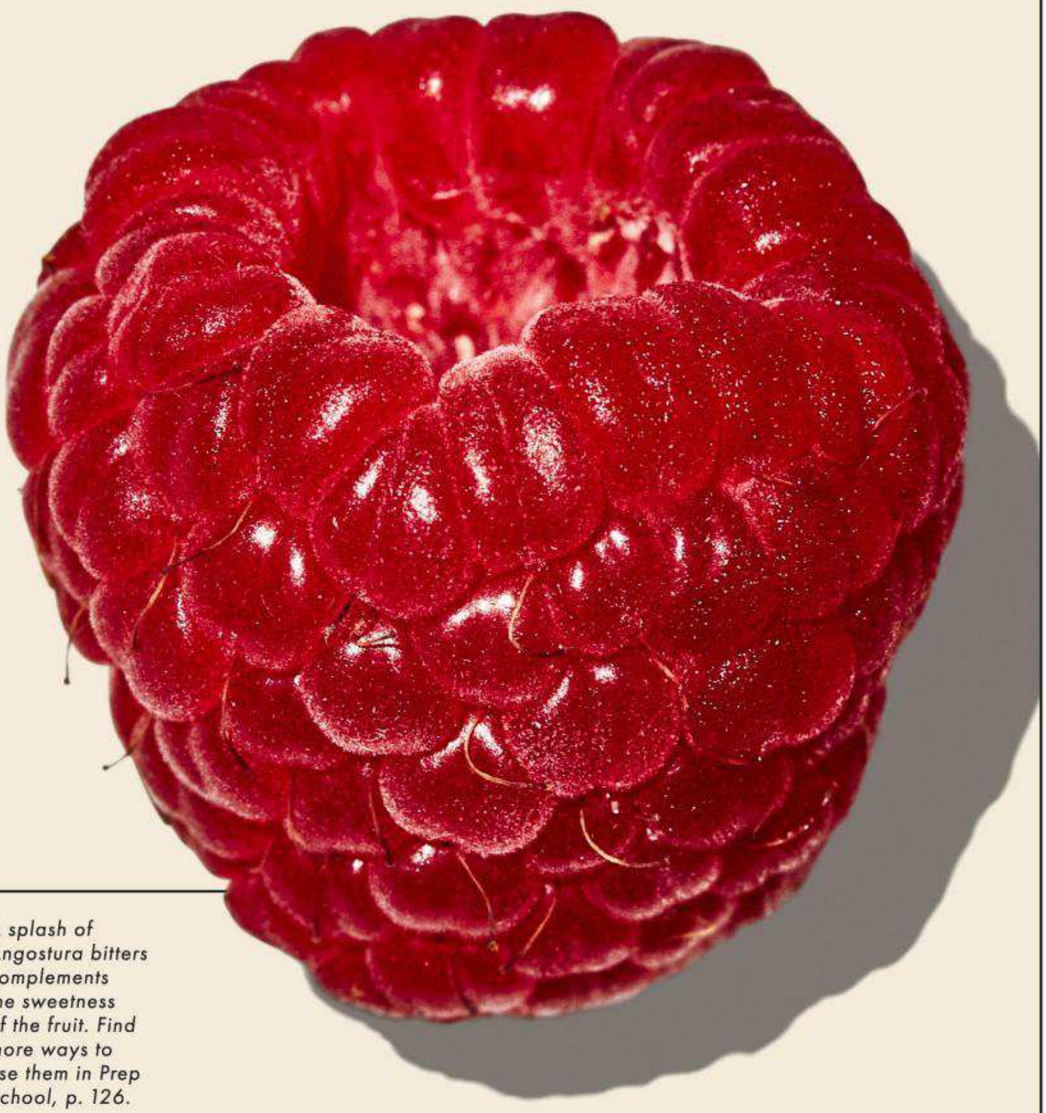

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A splash of Angostura bitters complements the sweetness of the fruit. *Find more ways to use them in Prep School, p. 126.*

RASPBERRY JAM WITH BITTERS

Place a small plate in the freezer. Bring **18 oz. fresh raspberries (about 5 cups)**, **1¼ cups sugar**, **1 Tbsp. finely grated orange zest**, **2 Tbsp. fresh orange juice**, and **2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice** to a simmer in a large saucepan, stirring gently until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat and boil, frequently skimming foam from surface, until reduced by a little more than a third and bottom of pot is visible when stirring, 15–20 minutes. Dab a tablespoonful of jam onto frozen plate and freeze 1 minute. Drag a finger through jam to see if surface wrinkles. If it does, remove saucepan from heat and stir in **1 Tbsp. Angostura bitters**. (If jam doesn't wrinkle, keep cooking, testing every minute, until it does.) Transfer jam to a 1-pint jar, cover, and let cool. Chill until ready to use. **DO AHEAD:** Jam can be made 2 months ahead. Keep chilled. *Makes about 1 pint*

FOOD STYLING BY REBECCA JURKEVICH. FOR RESTAURANT DETAILS, SEE SOURCEBOOK









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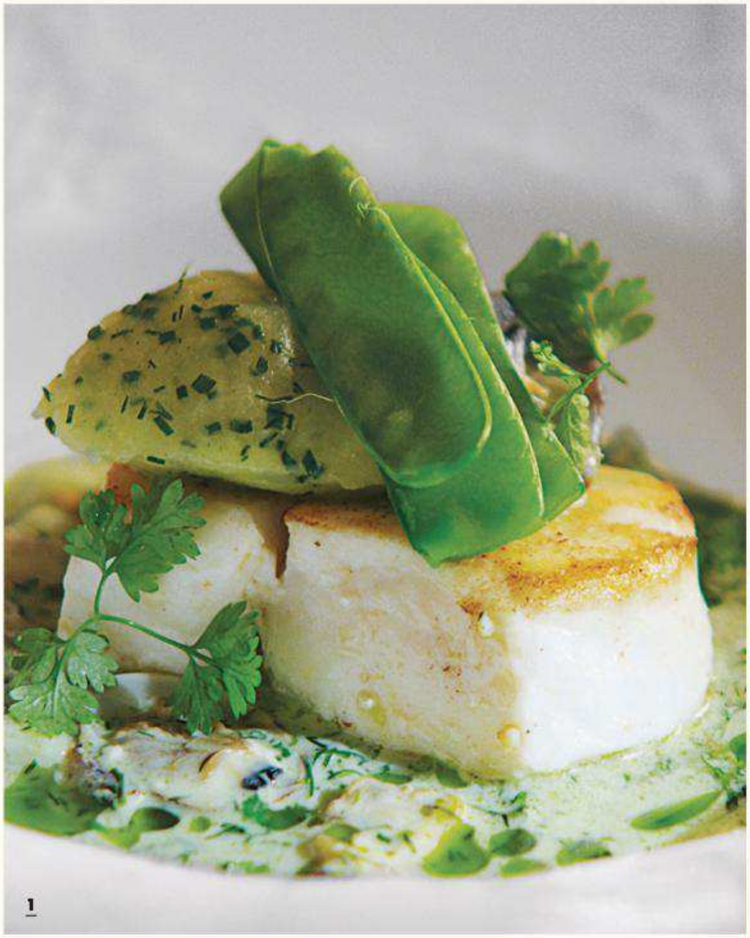
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▻ My favorite places to drink wine are invariably also places where I'm not really supposed to be drinking. Nothing makes me feel more like a truant teenager than sipping pét-nat in the park, cold rosato on the beach, or Savagnin in a crowded movie theater. Which is why I keep a cheap two-step wine key stashed in almost every tote, backpack, and coat pocket. (But I keep it in a checked bag when flying.) It doesn't have to be fancy. I buy mine in bulk online for a few bucks and distribute them liberally throughout the nooks and crannies of my life. Because having the truly inspired idea to take a good bottle on a hike—what the hell else are you supposed to do when you get to the top?!—and then finding yourself with nothing to open it with? Yeah. Be prepared. —***AMIEL STANEK***

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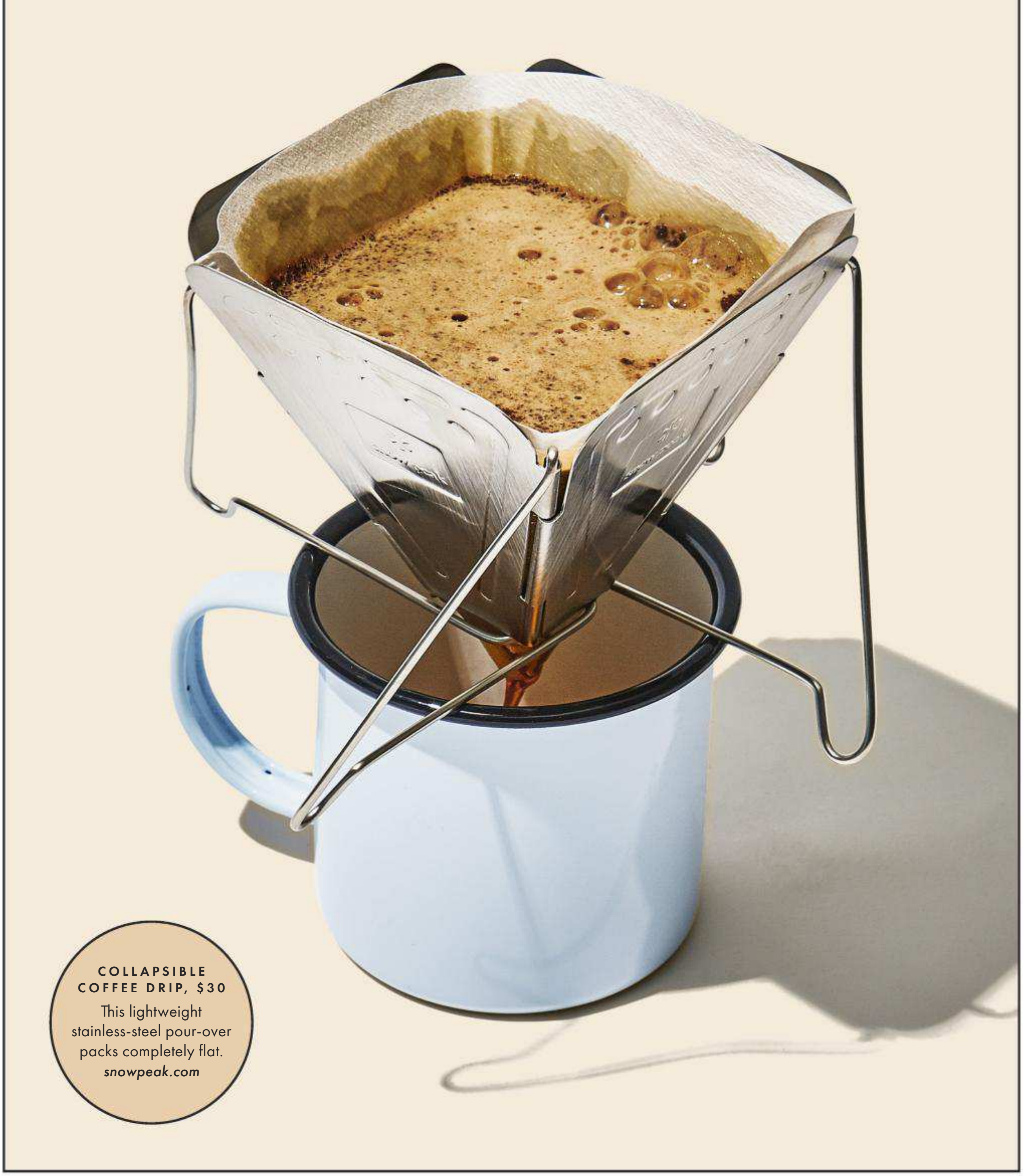
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There are some places I travel, like, say, the woods or my hometown, where stopping into a hip local café isn't really an option. Which brings me to the collapsible pour-over. A few years ago I bought one to take on camping trips, and my coffee game has never been the same. Now this lightweight gadget is an essential in my suitcase, whether I'm driving to upstate New York for the weekend or going on a cruise with my family. For the same amount of space as a few extra pairs of socks, I can fit paper filters, a small bag of coffee, and a pint-size grinder. I only need access to hot water to have a café-quality cup in my room. Another plus: Refills are basically free. —*ASHLEY MASON*



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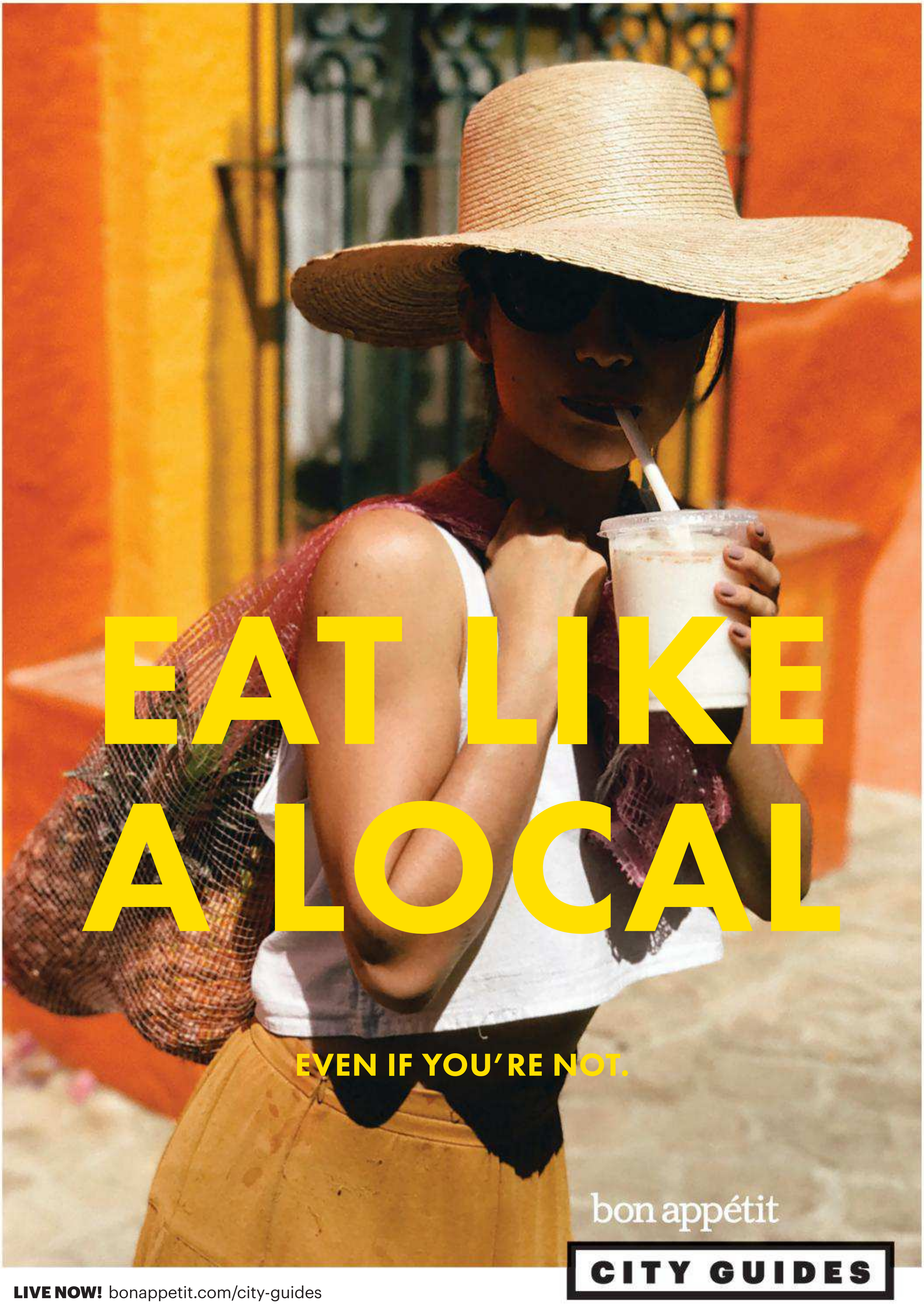
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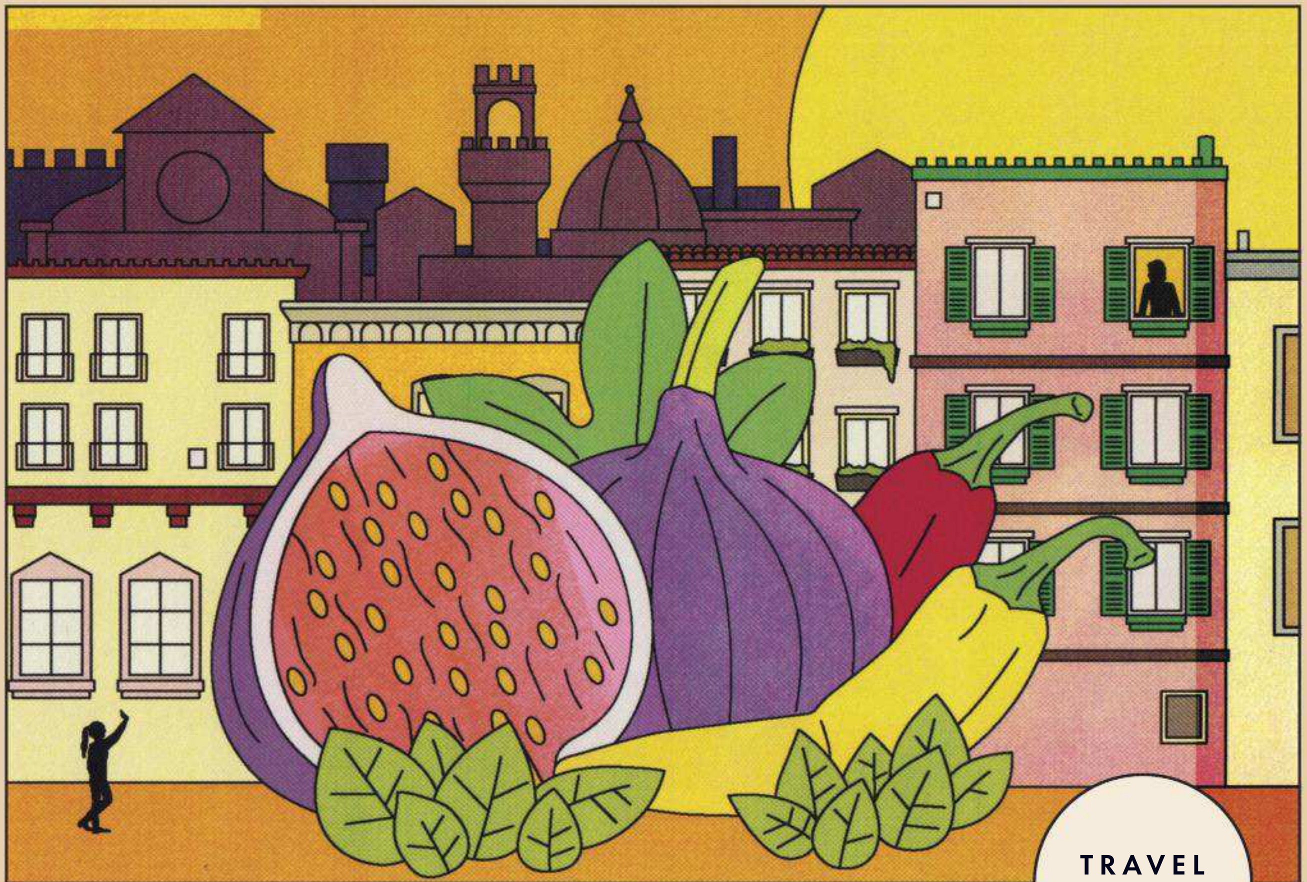
Photos of Airbnb listings never show me what I really need to see: what's inside those kitchen cabinets. And nothing sets me off like dull knives, scratched nonstick cookware, and a lack of basic utensils. I don't leave anything to chance when I plan to cook on vacation. My knife roll goes where I do, although it rarely contains more than one knife. Instead, I pack it full of the cooking tools that make or break my stay, like small silicone spatulas for scrambled eggs, a Microplane, wooden cooking spoons, and a fish spatula for everything else. Packed tightly in a knife roll, my tools take up as little room as possible. —*CHRIS MOROCCO*

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TRAVEL SPECIAL

The Accidental Apprentice

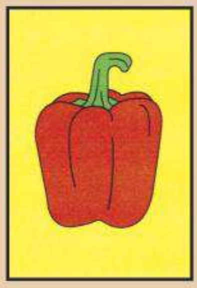
I ran off to Italy on a whim. Then I met the girl with the figs

by JASON HAMMEL


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One summer in my 20s, I ran off to Italy with the grand idea of, like, *figuring it all out*. I saved a few hundred dollars and rented an apartment sight unseen from a bulletin board in the train station. It was a single, drafty room, large enough for a twin-size bed, with a set of windows overlooking a wide, bustling piazza. In the corners were two doors: one for a bathroom so small you had to use the sink as a shower, another for the even smaller kitchen—a closet, really, with an old gas oven you lit with a match.

It was the address that changed my life: 26 Piazza del Mercato Centrale. Those windows looked out at one of the greatest food markets in the world.



I found myself there every morning, hunting through the vegetable aisles. I stumbled badly. Said asinine things like I wanted a "fish" when I wanted a "peach." I soon learned that in the market, vendors expected you to know exactly what you wanted, and not just in kilograms but by its purpose, who was coming for dinner, what the occasion was, and what recipe you'd use. The problem was, I didn't know any recipes. I didn't even know the names of the vegetables. And no one was coming to dinner.

That is, until I met the girl with the figs.

For several days I'd seen her tending her family stall. In a building full of pudgy old men, curmudgeons armed with paring knives and day-old newspapers, she was a captivating enigma, despite having a grandmotherly style herself. She wore pale cardigans in the mornings, had her apron loose around her hips, was thin, sharply boned, tough as them all, yet still young, spirited, beautiful.

That summer she had a small crop of black Mission figs from a southern relative, which she sold by the piece. Since then, in my 20 years of professional fig buying, I've never seen any so beautiful—purple-tinged dark skin with long, sharp stems where some careful gardener had clipped them with her shears. A select few had been cut open to reveal a red, swollen heart with caviar-like seeds, still firm and unyielding to the touch.

She talked to me about the fig trees. About the hill where they grew. About the woman with the shears: her grandmother, Sophia. I set two figs inside a paper bag and passed them back to her to weigh. She pointed to some mint bunched upright in a cup of water. I pointed at sage. She shook her head no, gestured toward the sun, then made a fan of her hand. She was saying, *Figs and mint is for a summer day*. From that moment we became close. I'd visit every day, and she'd make suggestions for what to eat, how to eat it, why one ingredient needed another. Figs and mint. Artichokes and leeks. Rosemary for when it rained.

One morning, in a newly confident stream of inept Italian, I told her how I was learning to cook in the kitchen in my apartment. How before that summer, I had never made food for myself. I can't imagine how it sounded, this guy speaking eagerly in words only a toddler would use. I described the tiny sink and the old gas oven. She sent me home with a package of sweet peppers, a fistful of oregano, and a jar of fig preserves she had made. Then she pointed at the chicken vendor and said, *Get the one on the right*.

It was early afternoon when she called up to me from the piazza. I went to the windows like a character from a play, and there she was, holding her loose apron in one hand and waving with the other. In my apartment, there was hardly room for us to stand together by the oven. I watched her skillfully trim the peppers in the air like a woodworker with a carving knife. Following the method of her grandmother, she charred the peppers in the oven, then took them out and covered them in streams of olive oil, so much that it pooled between the peppers, before adding sprigs of oregano and splashes of white vinegar. After tasting the oil with her finger, she turned the oven to its lowest setting and put the pan of peppers back in. Her grandmother would leave them in for hours.

Let's take a walk, she said. When we came back, the gentle heat of the oven had softened the peppers until they were creamy yet still somehow intact—still themselves. We roasted the chicken simply and glazed the peppers in the fig preserves. Since there was no room at my place, we took the plates to a nearby park, spread an old blanket on the warm grass, and ate with our fingers.

Slow-Roasted Bell Peppers

4 SERVINGS *We streamlined this recipe to get excellent results in an hour; serve alongside roast chicken or spooned over pan-fried fish or toasted bread.*

- **5 yellow, orange, or red bell peppers, halved, seeds and ribs removed**
- **6 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for serving**
- **Juice of 1 lemon**
- **1 Tbsp. fig jam**
- **1 Tbsp. white balsamic vinegar or white wine vinegar**
- **Kosher salt**
- **2 Tbsp. oregano leaves**

Heat broiler. Toss peppers with 2 Tbsp. oil on a rimmed baking sheet to coat and arrange cut side down. Broil, rotating baking sheet halfway through, until skin is blackened, 12–14 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 200° and continue to roast peppers until very soft but not mushy, about 1 hour. Let cool slightly, then scrape off and discard skins. Cut peppers lengthwise into ½"-wide strips.

Whisk lemon juice, jam, vinegar, and 4 Tbsp. oil in a medium bowl. If fig jam is very coarse, use a fork to mash into smaller pieces; season dressing with salt. Mix in peppers; taste and season well with salt. Toss to coat.

Just before serving, mix in oregano and drizzle generously with more oil.

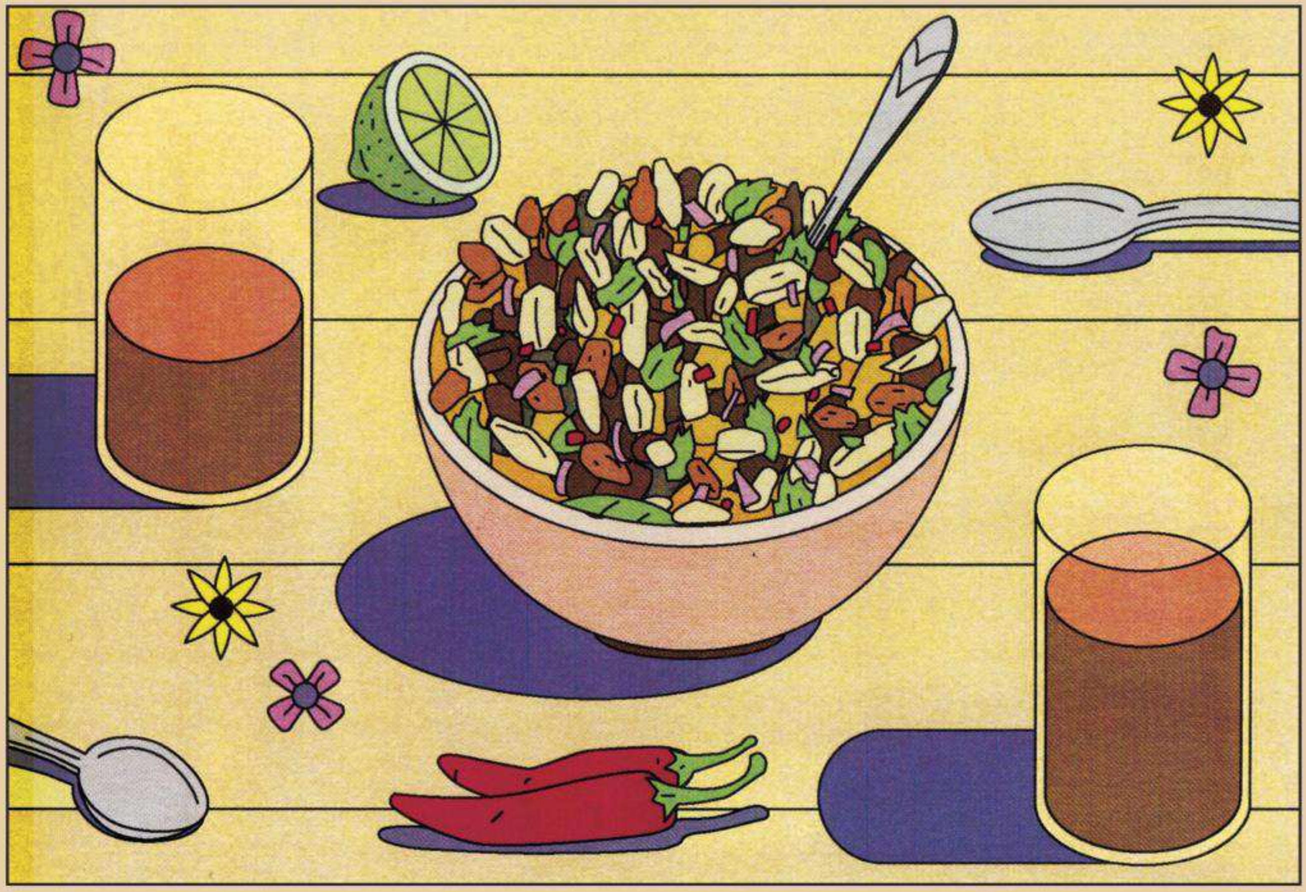
DO AHEAD: Peppers (without oregano) can be made 2 days ahead. Cover; chill.

At the time I didn't know this recipe would be anything other than a glossy detail from a summer *storia*. I didn't know that the way she carved the peppers with that bone-handled knife in her hands would come to me every time I've held a paring knife since. Or that I would remember this dish each time I tell a cook to take a confit, a poach, a braise, low and slow.

We spilled wine on the grass in the waning summer night. *Low and slow. An adagio*. It was July, and tourists looked at us with envy. *See*, I could hear one man saying, *look at how they live*. ■

> **Jason Hammel is the chef of Lula Cafe and Marisol in Chicago.**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE WYLESOL. FOR RESTAURANT DETAILS, SEE SOURCEBOOK.



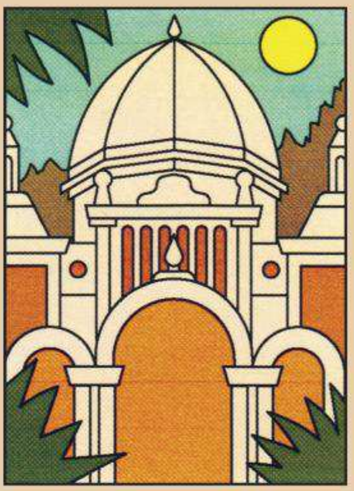
Drinking in Dhaka

A story of a young romance, a bowl of peanuts, and a plastic water bottle of whiskey

by RUMAAN ALAM

Early in a relationship, a weekend away can be fatal. So it seems like lunacy that a month after I met David, we planned a trip together to Argentina. From there, travel became a big part of our romance; there's no better way to get to know someone than to see them far from the comforts of home.

I got to know that David was curious, as he pored over guidebooks to find some alluring oddity to visit. (He dragged us to an out-of-the-way village in India known for its exuberantly frescoed homes, one of the most beautiful places I've ever been.) I got to know that he was tireless, eager to walk all over Prague, rain be damned. I got to know that he was outgoing, interested in talking to anyone, and also that he speaks French better than he lets on (a cliché, but it just *sounds* romantic). And I got to know that he is always, always prepared.



For an overnight flight, David had sleeping pills. To counteract prolonged exposure to unfamiliar cuisine, he had peanut butter. For destinations where the only coffee available was instant, he had a plastic French press and a pound of the good stuff. Who wouldn't fall in love?

Some years after that first vacation in Argentina, we planned a trip to Bangladesh, the country of my parents' birth but a place about which I, assimilated American kid that I was, knew almost nothing. David, ever prepared, stopped at the duty-free during our layover for a bottle of whiskey. The stuff is hard to come by in that devoutly Muslim country, and there's something so right about a drink after a long day in a new place. Upon arriving, David decanted the booze into an empty plastic water bottle, and that vessel accompanied us everywhere we went.

Outside Dhaka we visited a tea plantation, an astonishingly quiet place, verdant even in the dry winter season. We walked through the fields and the adjacent village where the agricultural laborers lived, then retreated to the main house for a secret nip from the plastic bottle and a very late dinner.

David's a photographer; I'm a writer. Thus, everywhere we went, he took pictures and I took notes, so it was a pleasure trip that also involved some work. We spent some time in the city of Chittagong on the Bay of Bengal, where the local trade is shipbreaking instead of sunbathing. We called in favors to be shown the corpses of decommissioned ocean vessels, a surreal blight on the environment usually kept hidden from tourists like us, but a remarkable thing we were very eager to see. That night we went back to our grim business hotel quite in need of a drink.

We spent three nights on a little boat puttering through the Bay of Bengal's mangrove forest, a habitat for the planet's few remaining wild tigers. It was there that we rang in the New Year, standing in our little cabin that was so tiny there was nowhere to sit beside the two narrow bunks. We drained the bottle that night.

Thereafter, our itinerary carried us back to the capital city of Dhaka, where we would see my favorite relatives, my aunt and uncle. They were a hilarious and cosmopolitan couple, easygoing people who were also superb hosts. When they understood that David and I were hoping to have a drink, they decided to take us to their club.

That club is a colonial-era workaround to circumvent the society's conservatism and is even now one of a handful of places in that huge city where one can order alcohol. It looked a bit like an unremarkable hotel or a building at a small out-of-the-way college, but it had an air of British-inflected pomp to it. My uncle told me I had to tuck in my shirt before going in, and the waitstaff spoke that hand-me-down formal English you hear in the former colonies. Our drinks were served with a little silver bowl containing a mound of peanuts tossed with minced onion, lime juice, and cilantro. Like every great bar snack, it made us want to snack more, drink more, talk more, laugh more, all of which we did.

David and I have been married for almost a decade now, and the way we travel these days is quite different. I've not left the country in eight years, which is, not coincidentally, precisely how old our first son is. These days, when I get on a plane, I rely on David, ever prepared, to remember to pick up a *Road & Track* to occupy the big kid and some bubble gum so the little one can pop his ears.

Our family trips are wonderful. But I don't mind remembering when we traveled a bit lighter. Though I'm not nearly skilled enough a cook to recreate the delicious, complex food we ate on our trip to Bangladesh, I can manage that simple bar snack and find myself transported, both across the world and back in time. ■

› Rumaan Alam is the author of the novels *That Kind of Mother*, out this month, and *Rich and Pretty*.

Peanut Drinking Snack

4 SERVINGS *This spicy, sour, salty, crunchy mix isn't your typical roasted bar nuts. Fresh lime juice, red onion, chiles, and cilantro give it amazing flavor. It's best served with spoons for scooping into your palm.*

- ½ small red onion, finely chopped
- 2 serrano chiles, seeds removed, finely chopped
- Zest and juice of ½ lime
- Kosher salt
- 1¼ cups salted, dry-roasted skin-on Spanish peanuts
- ½ cup finely chopped cilantro
- ¼ tsp. chili powder

Combine onion, chiles, lime zest and lime juice, and a large pinch of salt in a medium bowl. Let sit a minute or so to allow flavors to come together and for onion to mellow.

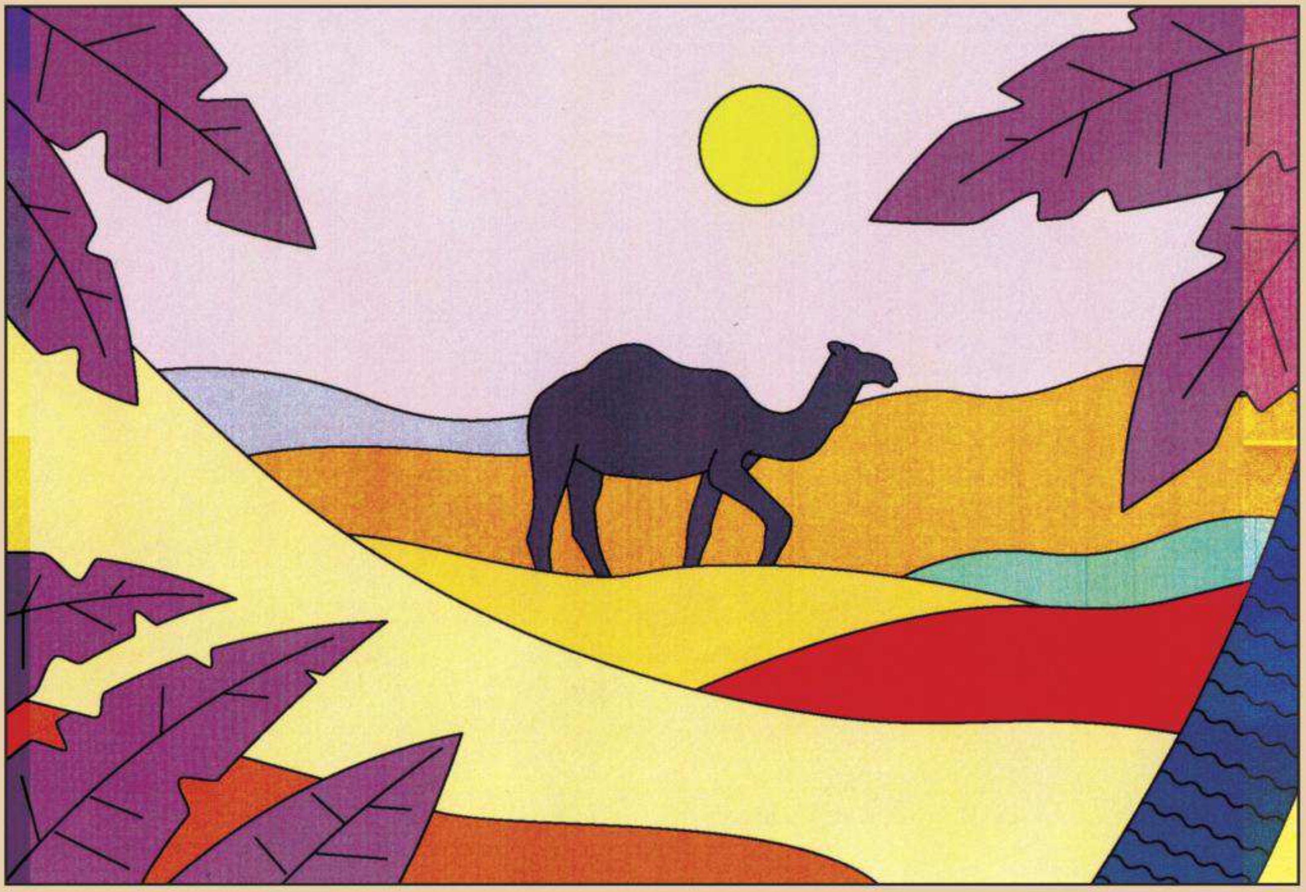
Add peanuts, cilantro, and chili powder to onion mixture and give it all a good toss. Taste and season with more salt as needed.

Serve peanut mixture in a small bowl with spoons.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE WYLESOL



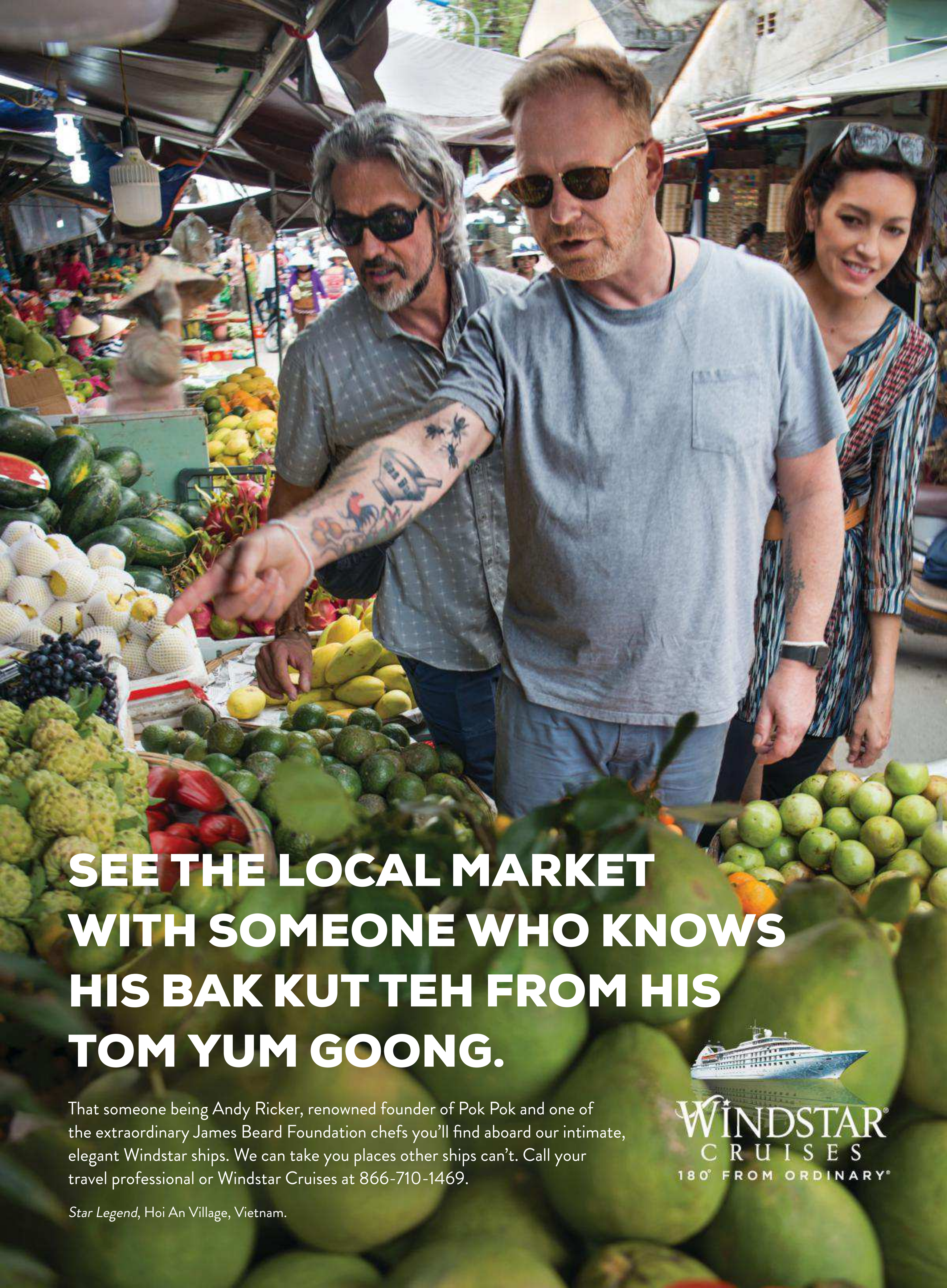
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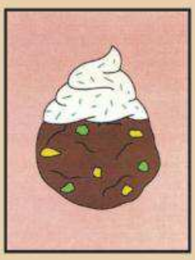
by ANISSA HELOU


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180° FROM ORDINARY

In all the years that I lived in Beirut, I never saw anyone sell or eat camel meat, nor did I ever see any camels: Lebanon has no desert. Then, one day in the late '90s, I was walking through the Midan quarter in Damascus, Syria, researching a book on street food, and I came nose to nose, as it were, with a furry camel's head hanging outside a butcher shop.

The store was a hole-in-the-wall kind of place, with a charcoal grill at the back and a rickety table and chairs in front, a typical setup in Syria, so that the owner can grill meat to order for customers who want to have a quick bite. The burly mustachioed butcher had his bloody apron tied tightly over his paunch and was standing in the doorway, inadvertently blocking my way in. I asked him why he had such a grisly camel's head, with its long neck still dripping blood, hanging outside. He explained that it was to show that he specialized in camel meat and to demonstrate the meat's freshness; the camel was clearly slaughtered that day.

I had to try some; it was too much of a novelty to pass up. I asked the butcher to grill me his tenderest cut, but he suggested I have kabab, otherwise the meat would be too tough. I was puzzled: In Lebanon, kabab means pieces of meat threaded onto skewers, which was what I thought I was asking for. But in Syria, kabab means meatballs or minced meat, also wrapped around skewers. I nodded in agreement, and he sliced a few pieces from the shoulder of the hanging carcass to put through his grimy meat grinder. Since the meat would be cooked, I didn't let this lack of hygiene worry me too much. The butcher then seasoned the meat with salt and the typical Syrian seven-spice mixture (cinnamon, allspice, cumin, and so on) and dexterously wrapped it around a couple of skewers. He placed these on his grill, and once the kabab had charred, he slipped them off the skewers and onto pita bread, serving them alongside a platter of raw onion, tomato slices, and a few sprigs of fresh mint.



The grilled meat was not unlike beef. It was a touch drier and possibly gamier but exciting all the same since it was my first taste of what many Arabs regard as a delicacy. Even if this was not a gastronomic revelation, I became curious about camel meat, wanting to taste it wherever I could find it.

More than a decade later I was in a catering kitchen owned and run by Umm Said, a formidable female cook in Al Ain, a tiny hilly Emirate in the United Arab Emirates, where I was shooting a TV series on Emirati cuisine. That day Umm Said's chefs were preparing a whole baby camel for a family reunion party. They had separated the beast into joints, which were marinating in a wonderfully fragrant combination of spices that included saffron, cardamom, garlic, rose water, and *b'zar*, an Arabian blend of more than half a dozen spices. They then arranged the joints in a huge pot, positioning the camel hump in the center, put the pot over a large gas fire, and piled glowing embers on the lid to heat the pot from above and below.

The hump was the prize of the feast, not so much for the fat but for the two fillets nestled underneath it. The chefs let me sneak a taste before the hump and the rest of the camel meat were assembled over a huge platter of steaming rice. That morsel tasted way better than the camel kabab I had in Syria: tender, with the subtle taste of the amazing marinade.

But it wasn't until a few years later, on a research trip to Saudi Arabia, that I had my favorite taste of camel, in the opulent dining room of the family hosting me. As in Syria, the medium was kabab, but here the ground meat was mixed with millet, then fried. The millet grains puffed up and became crunchy in the hot oil, providing a crisp contrast to the soft meat; tahini and tamarind dipping sauces added a juicy touch.

I often re-create that recipe at home but with beef given how elusive camel meat is in the West. Every so often I add fresh herbs to the tahini sauce to freshen it and turn it a brilliant green or Kashmiri pepper to give it a gentle kick and turn it a vivid red. Having started with a rather mediocre taste of Syrian camel kabab, I've come a long way. ■

› Anissa Helou is the author of nine books, including *Feast: Food of the Islamic World*, out this month.

Not-Camel Meatballs with Tahini Sauce

4 SERVINGS *Be sure to roll the meatballs firmly into the millet so that the tiny grains don't fall off during frying.*

MEATBALLS

- ½ cup millet
- 1 lb. ground beef chuck (20% fat)
- 5 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, plus more

SAUCE AND ASSEMBLY

- Vegetable oil (for frying; about 9 cups)
- ½ cup tahini
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A deep-fry thermometer

MEATBALLS Cook millet in a dry medium skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and lightly toasted, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl and let cool.

Meanwhile, mix beef, garlic, coriander, pepper, and 1½ tsp. salt in a medium bowl with your hands just to combine; be careful not to overwork.

Working one at a time, roll meat mixture loosely between your palms into 1¾" balls (you should have about 18) and place on a rimmed baking sheet. Roll each ball in toasted millet, pressing and packing firmly into meat with your palms. Repeat process as needed until completely coated. Chill meatballs at least 20 minutes and up to 2 hours (this will help the millet adhere during frying).

SAUCE AND ASSEMBLY Pour oil into a large heavy pot fitted with a deep-fry thermometer to come 1½" up sides; heat over medium until thermometer hits 350°.

Meanwhile, combine tahini and garlic in a medium bowl. Gradually add 6 Tbsp. water, then lemon juice, whisking constantly until sauce is smooth and pourable. Season with salt.

Using a slotted spoon, gently lower meatballs into oil and fry undisturbed 2½ minutes (millet will be light golden). Transfer to a baking sheet lined with paper towels; season lightly with salt. Serve meatballs with tahini sauce.


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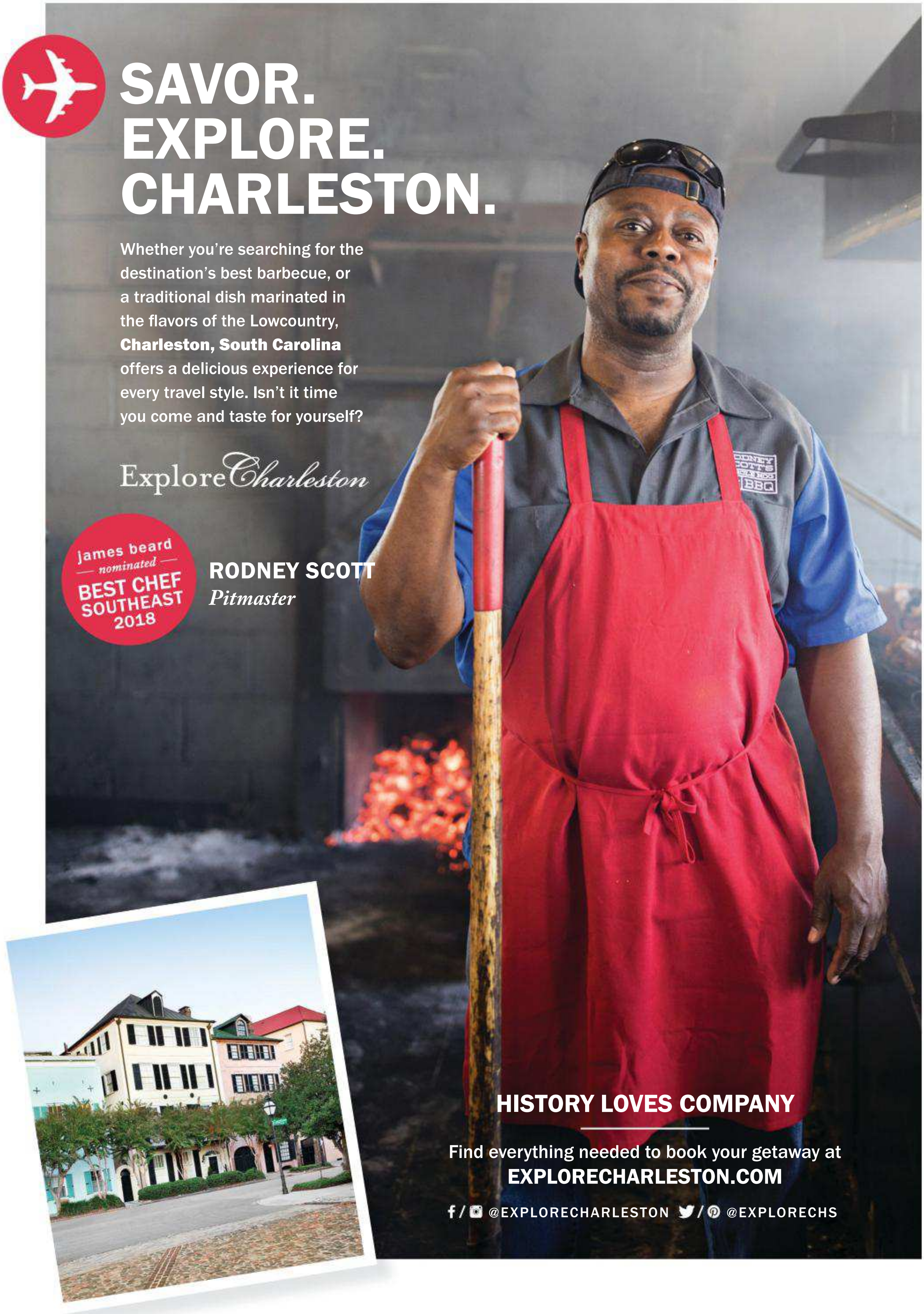











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How to Eat, Drink, Swim, Snack, Spritz, Nap, Party, and Summer Like an Italian

Our 42-page guide to living la dolce vita, wherever you are



Just another lunch in paradise, a.k.a. Lake Como

TEXT BY AMIEL STANEK — RECIPES BY IGNACIO MATTOS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL GRAYDON + NIKOLE HERRIOTT



Vacation essentials: still-life-worthy fruit (see p. 90) and aperitifs (see p. 100)

THE FUNNY THING ABOUT WORKING AT A FANCY FOOD MAGAZINE IS THAT

no matter how often you insist that your day to day involves a whole lot of sitting in meetings and staring at screens, your friends and family nevertheless believe that you spend all of your time jet-setting to exotic locales, schmoozing with chefs, and eating the most fabulous things from sunup to sundown. Another funny thing about working at a fancy food magazine is that sometimes, well, all of that is true.

The idea was simple, if a little nutty: Rent a gigantic villa on the banks of Lake Como, invite one of the most talented chefs in the world to host his friends there for a week, and meticulously document the good times and deliciousness that ensued. Ignacio Mattos, the Uruguay-born chef behind NYC's Estela, Café Altro Paradiso, and Flora Bar, agreed to our harebrained idea (can you blame him?) and rounded up a crew of food-world luminaries to come hang out: chef Gabriela Cámara of Mexico City's Contramar and San Francisco's Cala, Chad Robertson of Tartine fame, former Chez Panisse chef and cookbook author David Tanis, and more. The plan was not to make our readers jealous or to declare Lake Como to be the Ultimate Vacation Destination (not bad, though, if I do say so). It was to demonstrate how for people who truly love food, there is no greater thrill than spending a week just cooking. Really cooking, the way you do when you have time and space, and meals aren't problems to be solved but ends in and of themselves: the nodes around which a perfect day is organized. And while Lake Como offered the consummate backdrop for the crazy cook-in of our wildest fantasies, this isn't exactly a story about spending your summer vacation in Italy; it's about how to live la dolce vita wherever you happen to find yourself, be it Milan or Michigan, Maine or Maui.

And cook we did. "You want something?" became the three words I wanted to hear the most, a phrase that I developed a near-Pavlovian response to. Because when Mattos uttered that question—casually, with the barest hint of a smile—it meant he had something truly, madly, eyes-rolling-back-into-your-head delicious he wanted me to try. A slice of melon that sent juices coursing down my chin. The buttery jus at the bottom of the pasta pan. A chunk of fresh mozzarella di bufala; a spoonful of delicate shellfish broth. Despite the fact that the rotating cast of a dozen or so guests had a majestic lakeside palace and large swaths of northern Italy to explore, this is what kept us all in a tight orbit around the kitchen most of the week: the intimacy of being in the company of someone doing what they love, masterfully, and eager to share it.

Everywhere you turned there was food. Fresh Romano beans cooling in their cooking liquid under a gazebo. A giant wheel of Parm on the windowsill. Crates of produce peeking out from under tables and inside fireplaces. Mattos' eager-to-help friends moved in and out of the kitchen, teaching, learning, and swapping tasks in a weeklong game of culinary telephone. Time became elastic. "Quick" market runs were inevitably punctuated by snacks and a leisurely bottle of 11:30 a.m. Lambrusco at a nearby café. Alfresco lunches of simple summer salads and fig leaf–wrapped grilled turbot stretched well past sunset.

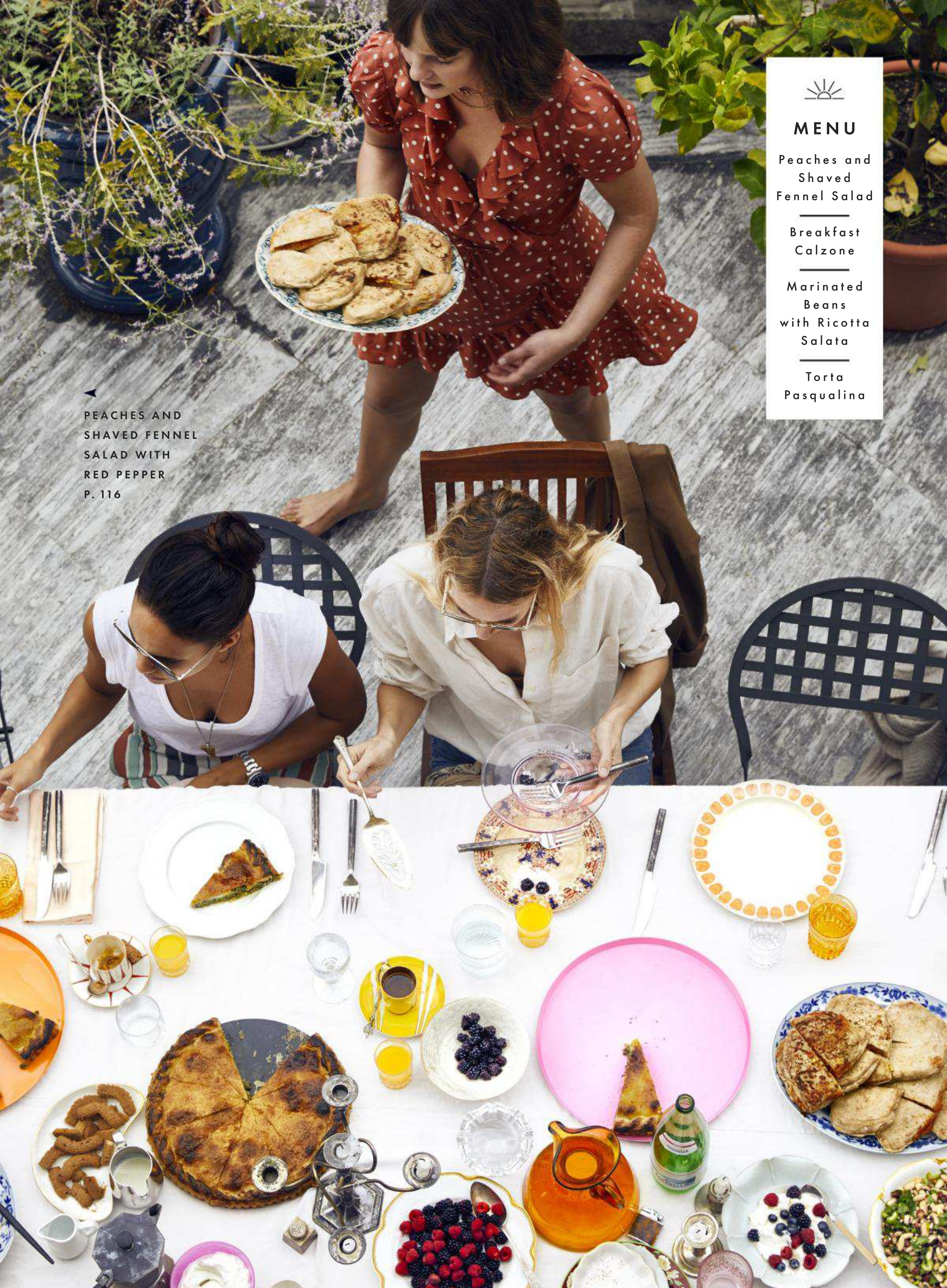
There's an idea that a once-in-a-lifetime trip like this one ruins a person for all the inevitably less-extravagant journeys that follow. But on that final night, grinning goofily at each other across a massive table strewn with platters of porterhouse and bottles of Barbera and flickering candelabras, a quiet understanding settled over the group. We would miss it all, sure, but there would be no #takemeback. We were taking it all—the recipes, the rhythm of the days, the unflinching belief that it's never too early for an Aperol spritz—with us. And every trip from now on, near or far, would be more delicious for it. ■

CHAPTER I

Make Breakfast an Occasion



A proper breakfast is the foundation upon which a great day is built. The kind where ripe summer peaches get dressed up, strong coffee flows, and a greens-and-cheese-stuffed tart disappears sliver by sliver. You're on vacation, remember? You've got nothing but time



MENU

Peaches and Shaved Fennel Salad

Breakfast Calzone

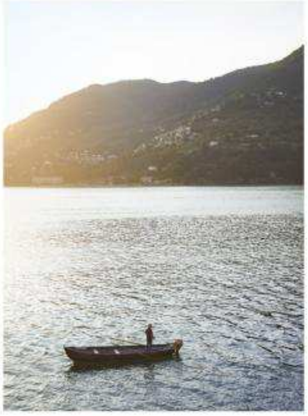
Marinated Beans with Ricotta Salata

Torta Pasqualina

PEACHES AND SHAVED FENNEL SALAD WITH RED PEPPER
P. 116



BREAKFAST CALZONE P. 116



Ignacio Mattos, the week's host, preps the next meal alongside food writer Gabe Ulla (left).



BY THE TIME I ARRIVED AT the house—*maybe* three hours after Mattos and co.—the kitchen had been fully rearranged, and prep for the next day's breakfast was underway. Anticipation hung in the air, the first-day jitters of a group not yet jelled. (To meet all the guests, turn to page 121.) But as cooking smells drew new arrivals into the kitchen and they were put to work, an easy camaraderie emerged. Bottles of juicy local rosato were opened; the sun set over the lake; a big pan of casual *cacio e pepe* appeared and disappeared. And by the time jet lag eventually beckoned everyone to bed, we fell asleep knowing that the next morning's meal would mark the start of something really, really special.



MARINATED BEANS WITH CELERY AND RICOTTA SALATA P. 116

TORTA PASQUALINA

This double-crusted stunner of a savory tart is a traditional Italian Easter dish, but it makes for an impressive vegetarian main no matter what you're celebrating

(RECIPE P. 116)

The amount of Swiss chard you need might surprise you, but it will cook down to a concentrated, well-seasoned filling.

Crimping the top and bottom crusts together with a casual twist-and-fold makes for a rustico presentation.









Making little divots in the chard mixture ensures the eggs stay put.

Egg wash and a sprinkle of sugar get that surface extra golden.



If you're going through all that trouble, you may as well make two tarts. (They're even better cold.)



Let's Go Shopping

IT WAS ALWAYS FOR "JUST one thing," one forgotten ingredient that we seemed to urgently need. But as soon as someone said the word *market*, the heads of anyone within earshot whipped around like a dog who'd overheard someone say "walk." Because a trip to the Mercato Coperto in Como was where the magic really happened. Trailing Mattos as he went from stall to stall, you got to hear the plan for the next meal evolve. A chicory salad becomes a Romano bean salad; room on the table must be made for a newly sampled cheese. It was that in-the-moment fast-and-looseness that we came for.





By week's end our crew was, shall we say, well-liked among the market's vendors.





Produce was bought for the day; staples like olive oil were procured for the week; and specialty items—an enticing tin of fish, an unfamiliar sauce—were picked up on a whim.







That man who looks like a waiter? Actually just a (very) friendly, er, morning drinker offering to sell one of his poems.





Who needs pants to go grocery shopping when you have funny hats and Birkenstocks?



CHAPTER II

Long. Lazy. Lunch.



If there's one thing the Italians have right, it's this: the longer the lunch, the better the day. A midday meal isn't a punctuation mark between activities—it *is* the activity. So throw a few bottles of rosato on ice and don't think beyond the long nap that'll cap it all off



SEA BREAM CRUDO WITH LEMON AND OLIVES P. 117

LUNCH

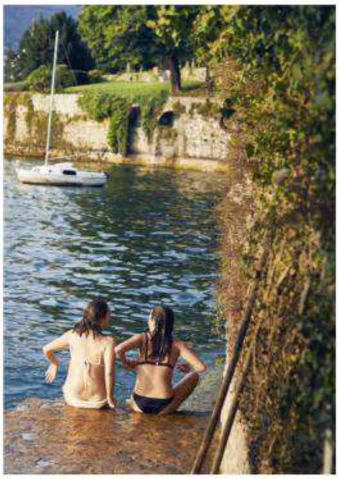
THE VILLA CAME WITH A standard grill, of course. But to Argentine chef-cum-ceramist Fernando Aciar, the idea of grilling over anything but wood was heresy. And so the grates of the gas grill were appropriated, loose paving stones unearthed, and our DIY grill setup for the week—felicitously situated as close as possible to the banks of the lake—was born. A rhythm emerged. Prep in the kitchen. Take prepped ingredients down to the grill station. Immediately take a dunk in that sweet, cool water. Dry off. Return to kitchen. Repeat. Then suddenly, several cycles and spritzes later: lunch!





ABOVE: Susannah Liguori arranging blooms from around the property.

BELOW: Mattos and pals take part in a little post-swim shrimp grilling.





TOMATOES AND HARICOTS VERTS WITH ANCHOVIES P. 117









Chad Robertson selfishly enjoying the afternoon when he could have been baking us loaves of his ethereal sourdough (we kid, we kid).

GRILLED TURBOT WITH CELERY LEAF SALSA VERDE P. 118



TIRAMISÙ WITH AMARETTI COOKIES P. 118



HANDMADE MALFATTI

A lot of fresh pastas are fussy and delicate, but this sturdy gnocchi-esque dumpling dough is a breeze to work with—low-pressure, high participation, big payoff

(RECIPE P. 117)

You don't need any fancy equipment to make these malfatti, just plenty of workspace to spread out on.





Cutting the dumplings into equally sized pieces ensures even cooking.





Finished malfatti should be stored in a single layer on a tray or baking sheet until ready to cook. Even though they're fairly hardy, piling them up will cause them to lose some of their shape.

Make sure to keep the table, your hands, and the dough well-floured to prevent sticking.



Lovingly handmade pasta wants to be finished with the simplest sauce possible.


1
2
3
4

Spritz O'Clock

COCKTAILS ON VACATION present a conundrum. Everybody wants them; nobody feels like mixing them. That's the genius behind the spritz bar: Set out plenty of ice, sparkling wine, and a few aperitifs, and let people go to town. It's the ideal DIY cocktail because there's no right way to make one. (Go ahead: Google it.) It's a *formula*. Fill a glass with ice, add a slug of your spirit of choice, fill it most of the way with bubbly, and top with club soda. Slip in a strip of citrus peel and take a sip. Too boozy? More soda. Too sweet? More Prosecco. Sip, adjust. Sip, adjust. Spritz the afternoon away.

STOCK YOUR CART

1

Whether you're spritzing, highballing, or hydrating, an ***ample supply of fizzy water*** *is key. Buy by the case.*

2

An ***aromatic strip of citrus peel*** *(or whole wedge if you're into that) makes the simplest drink feel deluxe.*

3

Crisp, affordable sparkling wine *(think Prosecco) is the vacation pour of choice—keep the bottles poppin'.*

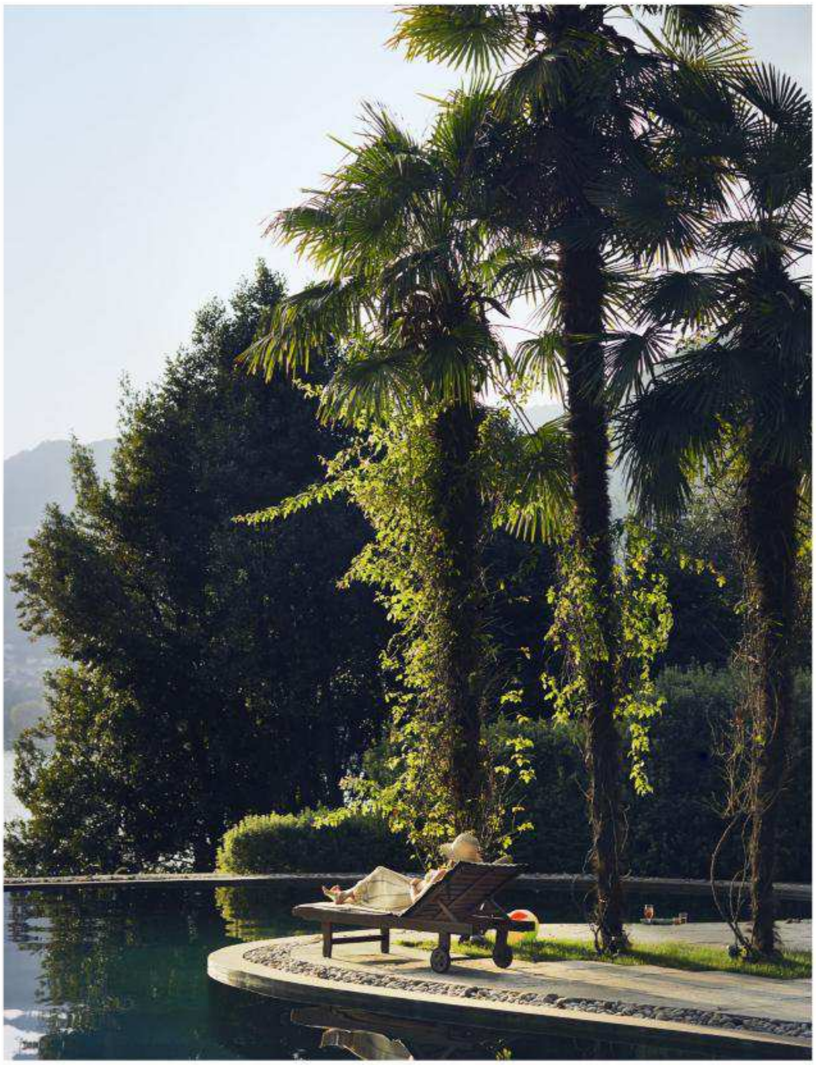
4

Bittersweet aperitifs like Campari and Aperol *are the backbone of the spritz—and useful for stronger drinks too.*



CHAPTER III

You Don't Have to Eat at the Table



A round of smoky poolside burgers. A picnic lunch of handmade shrimp empanadas. An ambling sunset walk with a cold bottle of sparkling and a bag of chips. Sometimes food just tastes better when you're outside



BEEF SLIDERS WITH PROVOLONE AND BALSAMIC ONIONS
P. 119

MENU

Beef Sliders

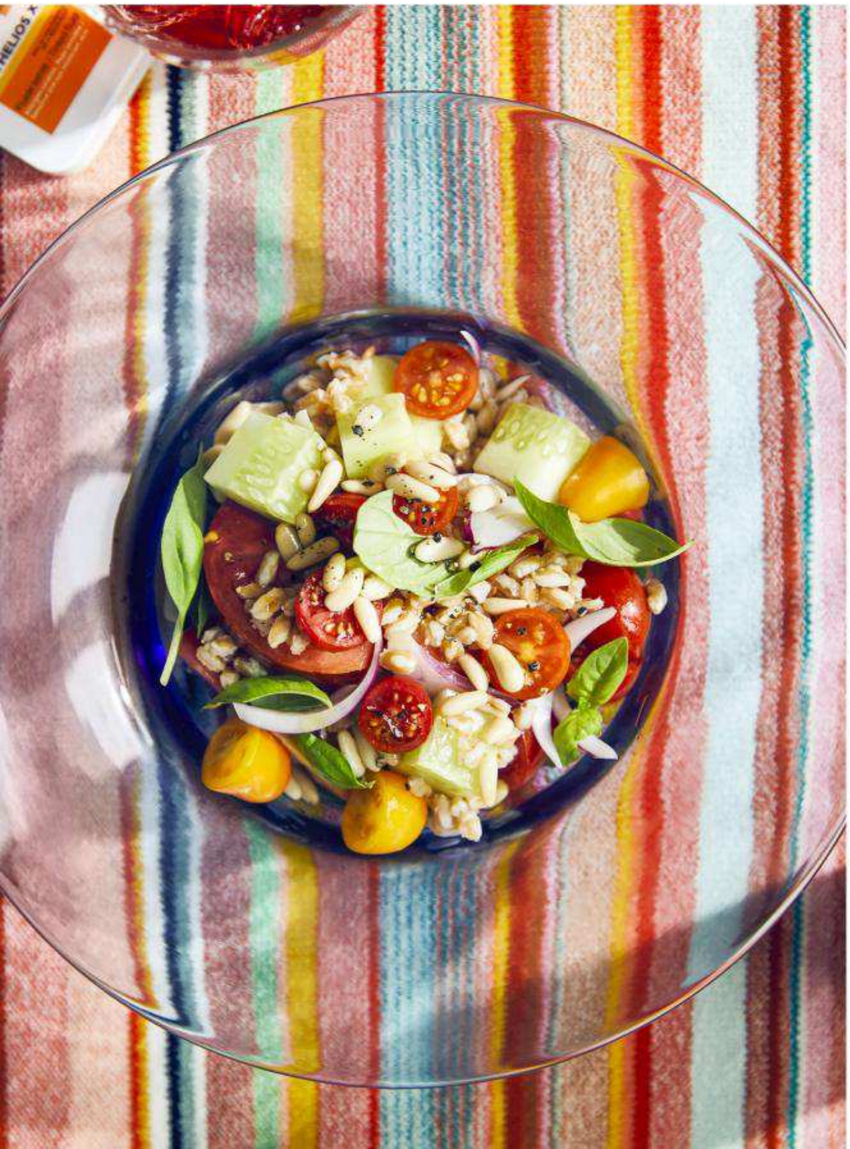
Grain Salad with Tomatoes

Shrimp Empanadas

Italian Sundaes with Nutella



I'M SURE THIS INFORMATION will elicit about as little sympathy from you as it did from my coworkers, but still: It rained most days that we were in Lake Como. Which meant that when the sun was out, so were we, and the food and drinks were most certainly coming too. Why is it that a juicy, sauce-oozing burger just tastes *different* when you're wearing a bathing suit? Or that a pitcher of Negronis disappears so much quicker when the afternoon light shines through it? Questions to ponder next time you're at the pool surrounded by crumbs, empty tumblers, and melting ice cream.



GRAIN SALAD WITH TOMATOES AND CUCUMBERS
P. 118



Whether you bring one or buy one, a beer cooler is nonnegotiable vacation-ware.



ITALIAN SUNDAES WITH NUTELLA P. 119

BE HERE NOW

You'll find all the recipes you need to re-create this trip beginning on p. 116, but if you really want the full experience, this incredible property is available for rent through the fine folks at luxuryretreats.com. The two adjoining residences—Villa Front Lake and Villa Batell—share two pools and a complimentary speedboat(!) and can sleep up to 26 guests total. Not. Bad. At. All.

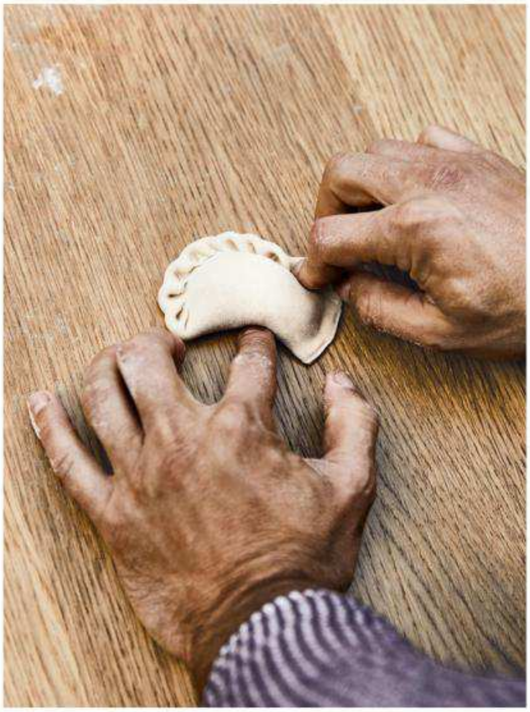
SHRIMP EMPANADAS

For a Uruguayan like Mattos, these snacks are a labor of love. Gather a crew to help stuff and pinch them, then fry up enough for a crowd

(RECIPE P. 119)

Rolling out the dough to this thinness takes patience.





An assembly line of eager helpers turns filling and folding into a group activity.



Careful crimping ensures a seal that won't burst in the hot oil.



Dusting the parcels with flour keeps them from sticking together.



Sun on your face, crispy, still-warm empanada in your hand

Snack Time

THE ITALIANS UNDERSTAND snacking. No drinks without snacks, and no snacks without drinks. But a spread of beautiful things to nibble on isn't about cooking; it's about *curating*. You pick up the best product you can find—be it prosciutto di Parma, pimiento cheese, or smoked trout dip—and set it out in a way that facilitates maximum deliciousness. Gently warming the olives. Draping spears of dripping-ripe melon with gossamer slivers of ham. Arranging a few morsels of provolone with pearl onions on toothpicks to ensure that everyone gets a perfect bite. See, snacks make it all possible. They're what afford you the flexibility to roll with this whole lunch-at-three, dinner-at-nine, no-schedule-but-*your*-schedule thing. They're the key to making sure that the second Negroni of the afternoon doesn't put anyone under the (still-to-be-set) table. And if you serve enough of them, nobody's going to complain when the dinner hour comes and goes.



PERFECT BITES

1

A sweet little ***pickled pepper wrapped around an anchovy wrapped around an olive****? Briny and beautiful, it's the ideal foil to a tall, bittersweet Campari and soda.*

2

Cheese, please! Nuggets of milky ***mozzarella di bufala paired with bits of mostarda****—chunks of fruit preserved with a touch of fiery mustard oil—make for a study in contrasts.*

3

Tiny jarred ***cocktail onions*** *are good for more than just Gibsons. Add a cube of tingly* ***provolone piccante, a bit of parsley, and a few grinds of black pepper****, and it's practically a salad!*

4

Few things taste as unmistakably of summer as sun-warmed ***cantaloupe coupled with the salty funk of dry-cured ham****. Just drizzle with grassy olive oil and eat. It's a classic for a reason.*

5

Think of this as an Italianate queso dip: soft, spicy ***Gorgonzola dolce mashed with a little heavy cream*** *until it reaches the ideal dippable consistency. Everything's easier in Italy.*



CHAPTER IV

Go Big Before You Go Home



The best way to keep the end-of-trip scaries at bay? Focus your energy on one final feast. Pull out all the stops. Spring for the good steaks. Uncork all the bottles. When "tomorrow" means leaving the fantasy behind, what else can you do but party like there's no tomorrow?



GRILLED RED MULLET WITH CHARRED ONIONS AND PINE NUTS
P. 120

MENU

Romano Beans with Mustard Vinaigrette

Arugula with Italian Plums

Paccheri with Shellfish

Grilled Red Mullet

Grilled Bistecca

Brioche au Rhum

Mattos, Gabriela Camara, Fernando Aciar, and many, many bottles of Nebbiolo



ARUGULA WITH ITALIAN PLUMS AND PARMESAN
P. 120





ABOVE: *Longtime friends and collaborators Jason Gregory and Eunice Lee—the designers behind Makr and Unis, respectively—take a breath after an epic meal.*

LEFT: BA's *Andy Baraghani*

WE HAD TO USE THAT DINING room for *something*. From the moment we arrived, we marveled at it—replete with towering oil portraits, psychedelic Murano-glass chandeliers, and a fleet of candelabras—wondering how it would figure into the narrative of the week. Then all of a sudden, there we were: the final meal, the last act. Flintstones-esque steaks, platters of paccheri tangled up with all manner of seafood, salads and salads and salads spread along a table so big you couldn't help but yell across. Candles burned down; music turned up; grappa came out. And we all danced, beyond full, as the curtain came down on our absurd, wonderful adventure.





GRILLED BISTECCA WITH HERBY FISH SAUCE P. 121



ROMANO BEANS WITH MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE AND WALNUTS P. 120



That guy on the right? Interpol guitarist Daniel Kessler, a.k.a. my teenage post-punk style icon. I tried extremely hard to play it cool.



BRIOCHE AU RHUM P. 121



PACCHERI WITH SHELLFISH, SQUID, AND TOMATOES P. 120



Make Breakfast an Occasion

Peaches and Shaved Fennel Salad with Red Pepper

8 SERVINGS *There's no reason to make this savory fruit salad unless the peaches you have are worth celebrating or you can get your hands on some superb nectarines.*

- **5 large peaches (about 2 lb. total), cut into ½"-thick wedges**
- **3 Tbsp. Chardonnay vinegar or white wine vinegar, divided**
- **Kosher salt**
- **1 small fennel bulb, halved, very thinly sliced on a mandoline, plus coarsely chopped fennel fronds**
- **1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice**
- **Extra-virgin olive oil (for drizzling)**
- **Aleppo-style or other mild red pepper flakes (for serving)**

Toss peaches in a large bowl with 2 Tbsp. vinegar and pinch of salt to coat. Arrange peaches on a platter and spoon any juices left in bowl over top.

Toss fennel in the same bowl with lemon juice and remaining 1 Tbsp. vinegar to coat; season with salt.

Scatter dressed fennel and fennel fronds over peaches on platter and drizzle with oil. Sprinkle with some red pepper flakes.

Marinated Beans with Celery and Ricotta Salata

8 SERVINGS *This simple marinade will fancy up any type of canned beans.*

- **4 15-oz. cans cannellini (white kidney) beans, navy beans, and/or black-eyed peas, rinsed**
- **4 celery stalks, thinly sliced**
- **⅔ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- **6 Tbsp. white wine vinegar**
- **1 Tbsp. coarsely chopped thyme, plus more for serving**
- **Kosher salt**
- **4 oz. ricotta salata (salted dry ricotta), crumbled**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**

Toss beans, celery, oil, vinegar, and 1 Tbsp. thyme in a large bowl to combine; season generously with salt.

Just before serving, transfer beans to a shallow bowl and top with ricotta salata, pepper, and more thyme.

DO AHEAD: Bean salad (without celery and ricotta salata) can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill.

Breakfast Calzone

8 SERVINGS *If you can't find nduja, a funky and spicy spreadable Italian salami, substitute torn or chopped hot soppressata or a salami with some kick.*

- **2 1-lb. 6-oz. balls of pizza dough, room temperature**
- **All-purpose flour (for surface)**
- **6 oz. Fontina cheese, grated (about 2 cups)**
- **1 cup whole-milk fresh ricotta**
- **4 oz. nduja**
- **8 large egg yolks**
- **1 Tbsp. finely chopped rosemary**
- **Extra-virgin olive oil**
- **Kosher salt**

Prepare a grill for medium-low heat. Set cast-iron griddle on grill. (Alternatively, heat on stovetop over medium-low. And if you don't have a cast-iron griddle, use a cast-iron skillet instead and cook in batches.) Cut each piece of dough into quarters for 8 pieces total. Roll out 1 piece of dough to an 8x6" oval. Spoon a heaping ¼ cup Fontina over half of dough and form a well in the center. Dab 2 Tbsp. ricotta and 1 Tbsp. nduja over Fontina, leaving well empty; slip a yolk into the well. Sprinkle with a bit of rosemary and drizzle with oil; season with salt. Moisten edges of dough with water, fold empty side of dough over filling and press together edges to seal. Brush with oil; sprinkle with salt. Repeat with remaining ingredients to make 7 more calzones.

Place calzones, oiled side down, on griddle and cook until deeply browned, pressing gently with a spatula to create contact with griddle, about 5 minutes. Brush oil on the other sides and sprinkle with salt; turn calzones over. Cook until other sides are deeply browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let sit 1 minute before cutting in half.

Torta Pasqualina

8 SERVINGS *Don't expect your first pasqualina to look perfect. But it will taste absolutely amazing if you remember three key steps, detailed in Prep School (p. 125): Don't sweat the crust, squeeze every drop of liquid out of the greens, and save your chard stems!*

DOUGH

- **3½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 Tbsp. sugar**
- **1½ tsp. kosher salt**
- **1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into pieces, chilled in freezer**

FILLING AND ASSEMBLY

- **3½ lb. Swiss chard (about 5 bunches), ribs and stems removed**
- **3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
- **2 medium onions, finely chopped**
- **10 large eggs**
- **1½ cups whole-milk fresh ricotta, preferably box-drained, patted dry**
- **4 oz. Parmesan, coarsely grated**
- **1 large garlic clove, finely grated**
- **2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- **¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg**
- **2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more**
- **1½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper, plus more**
- **All-purpose flour (for surface)**
- **2 tsp. sugar**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A 10"-diameter tart pan with a removable bottom

DOUGH Pulse flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor to combine. Add butter and process until largest pieces of butter are pea-size. Drizzle in ½ cup ice water and pulse until a few shaggy pieces of dough form.

Transfer dough (get all the dry bits) to a work surface. Drizzle 1 Tbsp. ice water over; knead to just barely bring dough together. Divide in half. Place a half on a

piece of plastic wrap. Using plastic and your hands, form dough into a ¾"-thick disk and tightly wrap. Repeat with remaining dough. Chill at least 2 hours.

DO AHEAD: Dough can be made 5 days ahead. Keep chilled, or freeze up to 1 month.

FILLING AND ASSEMBLY Working in batches, cook Swiss chard in a large pot of boiling water until bright green and slightly softened, about 2 minutes. Using tongs, transfer to an ice bath to stop the cooking. Swish to cool, then remove greens and squeeze out as much excess liquid as possible. Transfer greens to a cutting board and finely chop (you should have about 4 cups).

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium. Cook onions, stirring occasionally, until very soft and golden but not browned, 8–10 minutes. Remove from heat and mix in greens. Let cool.

Using a fork, whisk 4 eggs in a large bowl to blend. Add ricotta, Parmesan, and Swiss chard mixture and mix to combine. Add garlic, lemon zest, nutmeg, 2 tsp. salt, and 1½ tsp. pepper. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed.

Let dough sit at room temperature 5 minutes to soften. Roll out 1 disk of dough on a lightly floured surface to a 12" round about ⅛" thick. Transfer to a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Roll out remaining disk of dough and carefully transfer to tart pan. Lift up edges and allow dough to slump down into pan. Press dough firmly into sides and bottom of pan. Trim, leaving about a ½" overhang. Beat 1 egg in a small bowl to blend and brush edges of dough.

Scrape filling into pan, creating a mound in the center. Using an offset spatula, evenly spread filling over bottom, smoothing surface. Use a spoon to create 5 divots in filling and crack an egg into each. Season eggs with a bit of salt. Arrange remaining round of dough over filling. Trim edges of top round, leaving ½" overhang. Fold edge of bottom crust up and over top, then press edges together to seal. Crimp and brush top of dough with remaining beaten egg; sprinkle with sugar. Transfer pie to a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet and chill in freezer 10 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375°. Bake pie until crust is deep golden brown, 65–75 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let pie cool in pan at least 30 minutes before serving.

DO AHEAD: Pie can be baked 1 day ahead. Let cool; cover and chill.

Long. Lazy. Lunch.

Sea Bream Crudo with Lemon and Olives

8 SERVINGS *Sea bream, common in the Mediterranean, has lean flesh with a light, delicate flavor. If you can't find it, porgy or snapper are suitable subs.*

- **2 plum tomatoes, halved crosswise**
- **Kosher salt**
- **½ lemon**
- **1½ lb. highest-quality sea bream, skin, bones, and blood lines removed**
- **1½ cups arugula**
- **⅓ cup Niçoise olives**
- **½ small red onion, very thinly sliced**
- **½ cup fresh lemon juice**
- **Extra-virgin olive oil (for drizzling)**
- **Flaky sea salt**

Grate tomatoes on a box grater until all the flesh is grated and there is just skin left; discard skin. Transfer tomato pulp to a small bowl and season lightly with kosher salt.

Cut lemon half into quarters; remove seeds and white pith in the center. Thinly slice quarters.

Place fish on a cutting board. Hold a long knife at a 45° angle and cut fish with the grain into ¼"-thick slices (use a sharp blade and aim for one long, clean stroke). Cut each slice in half crosswise.

Arrange sea bream on chilled plates. Spoon a bit of grated tomato around and scatter lemon pieces over. Top with arugula, olives, and onion. Pour lemon juice over, then sprinkle with sea salt and drizzle with oil.

Tomatoes and Haricots Verts with Anchovies

8 SERVINGS *This time anchovies are not optional. They're an integral ingredient here, and it's worth seeking out quality brands. We love the oil-packed ones from Ortiz, Agostino Recca, and Merro.*

- **4 oz. haricots verts or green beans, trimmed**
- **Kosher salt**
- **2 lb. medium tomatoes, some sliced, some cut into wedges**
- **1 pint Sun Gold and/or cherry tomatoes, halved crosswise**
- **16 oil-packed anchovy fillets**
- **¼ cup celery leaves or parsley leaves**
- **2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar**
- **2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
- **Smoked or regular flaky sea salt**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**

Cook haricots verts in a large pot of boiling salted water until bright green and tender, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a bowl of ice water; let cool. Drain and pat dry.

Toss haricots verts, both kinds of tomatoes, anchovies, celery leaves, and vinegar in a large bowl; season lightly with kosher salt.

Transfer salad to a platter, drizzle with oil, and season with sea salt and pepper.

Malfatti with Pancetta and Cherry Tomatoes

8 SERVINGS *Malfatti—literally "badly made"—are not as tricky to shape as you think. Because Mattos' recipe has more flour than others, the dough is forgiving.*

- **1 cup all-purpose flour, plus more**
- **2 cups whole-milk fresh ricotta, preferably box-drained**
- **1 large egg, room temperature**
- **6 oz. Parmesan, finely grated, plus more for serving**
- **1½ tsp. kosher salt, plus more**
- **4 oz. pancetta (Italian bacon), thinly sliced**
- **3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling**
- **2 cups Sun Gold and/or cherry tomatoes**
- **2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into pieces**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**
- **½ lemon**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A sheet of cheesecloth

Dust a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet generously with flour; set aside. Place ricotta in the center of cheesecloth. Gather up the sides in your hands and wring out excess liquid. Transfer ricotta to a few sheets of paper towels and pat dry with more paper towels.

Pulse ricotta, egg, 6 oz. Parmesan, and 1½ tsp. salt in a food processor to combine. Transfer to a large bowl; sift in 1 cup flour and mix until just barely combined (try not to overmix). Scrape ricotta mixture onto a floured surface and divide into 4 pieces. Roll each piece into a 22x¾" rope. Cut into ¾" pieces and place dumplings on prepared baking sheet.

Combine pancetta and 3 Tbsp. oil in a cold large skillet and set over medium heat. Cook, stirring often, until pancetta is brown and crisp, 6–8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a bowl; reserve skillet.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a simmer (do not let it boil). Working in batches if needed, cook dumplings until they expand in size and float to the surface, about 3 minutes.

Ladle about ¾ cup pasta cooking liquid into reserved skillet and add dumplings, tomatoes, and butter. Increase heat to medium-high and cook, stirring gently (don't toss), until sauce thickens slightly and coats dumplings, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper.

Divide malfatti among bowls. Finely grate lemon zest over, drizzle with oil, and top with pancetta and Parmesan.

Grilled Turbot with Celery Leaf Salsa Verde

8 SERVINGS *Don't fret if you can't find turbot. Look out for other flatfish such as Dover sole or flounder.*

- **2 whole turbot (about 3 lb. each), heads and fins removed, split in half along the backbone**
- **1¼ cups extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **Kosher salt**
- **8 sprigs rosemary, divided**
- **1½ cups finely chopped parsley**
- **½ cup finely chopped celery leaves**
- **1 garlic clove, finely grated**
- **½ lemon**
- **½ tsp. Aleppo-style or other mild red pepper flakes**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**
- **Aioli or store-bought mayonnaise (for serving)**

Prepare a grill for medium-low indirect heat (for a gas grill, leave one or two burners off; for a charcoal grill, bank coals on one side of grill). Tear off 4 large sheets of foil. Rub fish with ½ cup oil (2 Tbsp. per piece) and season with salt. Working one at a time, place a fillet in the center of a sheet of foil and top with 2 rosemary sprigs. Fold in short sides of foil over fish, then fold in long sides and roll edges together to seal.

Place pouches on cool side of grill, cover grill, and cook fish, turning once, 20–25 minutes. Open a pouch to check fish. Flesh should be slightly opaque and the tip of a knife should slide through easily. Grill a little longer if needed.

Meanwhile, combine parsley, celery leaves, and garlic in a medium bowl. Finely zest lemon into bowl, then squeeze in juice. Add red pepper flakes and mix in remaining ¾ cup oil; season with salt and black pepper. Let salsa verde sit 10 minutes for flavors to come together.

Transfer fish to a platter and serve with salsa verde and aioli.

Tiramisù with Amaretti Cookies

8 SERVINGS *The crunchy almond cookies replace soft smushy ladyfingers for a welcome twist on the classic dessert.*

- **6 large egg yolks**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **3 cups mascarpone**
- **3 Tbsp. dark rum**
- **¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- **1 cup espresso or very strong coffee**
- **1 7-oz. bag amaretti cookies (Italian macaroons; about 4 cups)**
- **2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: Eight 6-oz. glasses or ramekins

Whisk egg yolks in a medium bowl to blend, then gradually add sugar, whisking constantly until mixture is thick, smooth, and pale yellow. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold in mascarpone, rum, and salt; set aside.

Place espresso in a small bowl. Working in batches, gently mix and turn cookies in espresso 20 seconds to soak. Divide cookies among glasses and top each with ½ cup mascarpone mixture. Chill at least 1 hour.

Dust tiramisù with cocoa powder just before serving.

DO AHEAD: Tiramisù can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and keep chilled.

You Don't Have to Eat at the Table

Grain Salad with Tomatoes and Cucumbers

8 SERVINGS *We call for semi-pearled grains because they cook more quickly and have a roughened-up texture that helps them soak up the dressing. Browning them first deepens their flavor.*

- **2 cups semi-pearled farro or spelt**
- **Kosher salt**
- **⅓ cup pine nuts**
- **3 medium Persian cucumbers, peeled, cut into ¾" pieces**
- **3 medium tomatoes, thinly sliced**
- **1 pint Sun Gold and/or cherry tomatoes, halved crosswise**
- **1 small red onion, very thinly sliced**
- **Juice of 1 lemon (or more)**
- **⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- **2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**
- **2 cups torn basil leaves**

Preheat oven to 350°. Cook farro in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium heat, stirring often, until golden brown and toasted (it should start to smell like popcorn and some grains may pop), about 4 minutes. Remove pot from heat and pour in cold water to cover grains by 1"; throw in a healthy handful of salt. Set pot over medium-high heat and bring water to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, skimming foam occasionally from surface, until grains are tender but still have some bite, 25–35 minutes. Drain and transfer farro to a large bowl.

Meanwhile, toast pine nuts on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing once, until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Let cool.

Add pine nuts, cucumbers, both kinds of tomatoes, red onion, lemon juice, oil, and vinegar to bowl with farro and toss everything together to combine. Taste and season with salt, pepper, and more lemon juice, if desired.

Top salad with basil just before serving.

DO AHEAD: Farro can be cooked 1 day ahead. Let cool; cover and chill.

Shrimp Empanadas

8–12 SERVINGS *If you can find head-on shrimp, please, please buy them and add the heads to the stock. They'll provide an incomparable richness and depth.*

DOUGH

- **4 oz. lard, melted, slightly cooled**
- **1 Tbsp. kosher salt**
- **1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar**
- **6 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for surface**

FILLING

- **1 lb. small shrimp, preferably head-on, peeled, deveined, shells and heads reserved**
- **4 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **⅓ cup dry white wine**
- **1 medium onion, very finely chopped**
- **4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced**
- **6 Tbsp. chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces**
- **2 Tbsp. finely chopped cilantro**
- **1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- **½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **Kosher salt**
- **Vegetable oil (for frying; about 8 cups)**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A 4½"-diameter cookie cutter; a deep-fry thermometer

DOUGH Mix warm lard, salt, vinegar, and 2 cups lukewarm water in a large bowl to combine. Gradually add 6 cups flour, mixing with a sturdy wooden spoon or your hands until a shaggy dough forms.

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and knead until mostly smooth and no dry spots remain, about 2 minutes. Wrap in plastic and chill at least 2 hours.

DO AHEAD: Dough can be made 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.

FILLING AND ASSEMBLY Cut shrimp in half lengthwise, then finely chop (it's okay if some pieces get pasty). Set aside.

Heat 2 Tbsp. olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high. Add reserved shrimp shells and heads (if using) and cook, smashing down on shells and heads occasionally with a wooden spoon, until pink and bottom of pot begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Add wine and cook until reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Add ⅔ cup water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until reduced by one-third, 6–8 minutes. Let cool. Strain stock through a fine-mesh sieve into a heatproof measuring glass, pressing on solids; discard solids.

Wipe out pan, add remaining 2 Tbsp. olive oil, and set over medium heat. Cook onion, stirring often, until softened but without taking on any color, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add shrimp stock and reserved shrimp and cook, stirring occasionally, until most of the shrimp have turned pink, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. (Shrimp will continue cooking in the residual heat.) Mix in butter, cilantro, lemon zest, and red pepper flakes; season with salt. Let cool 20 minutes, then transfer to a medium bowl. Chill at least 1 hour before using.

Divide dough into 6 equal pieces. Cover all but 1 piece with plastic wrap and chill. Roll out remaining piece of dough to a 14" round about 1⁄16" thick.

Using cutter, punch out 6 rounds from dough. Place 1 Tbsp. filling in the center of each and brush water halfway around edge of each round. Fold dry side of dough up and over filling to create a semicircle. Pinch edges to seal; crimp. Transfer to a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Chill 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, pour vegetable oil into a large heavy pot fitted with thermometer to come halfway up sides. Heat over medium-high until thermometer registers 350°. Working in batches and adjusting heat to maintain temperature, fry empanadas, turning often, until deep golden brown, 5–7 minutes per batch. Transfer to a wire rack set over paper towels; let cool 2 minutes before serving.

DO AHEAD: Filling can be made 1 day ahead. Keep chilled.

Beef Sliders with Provolone and Balsamic Onions

8 SERVINGS *Ignacio Mattos changed our feelings about balsamic vinegar when he used it to macerate red onions for these Italian sliders. Read about our taste-test winner in Prep School, p. 125.*

- **2 lb. ground beef (20% fat)**
- **Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper**
- **4 slices provolone piccante cheese, torn in half**
- **8 potato slider buns**
- **1 large red onion, very thinly sliced into rounds**
- **3 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar**
- **1 tsp. sugar**
- **Aioli or store-bought mayonnaise (for serving)**

Divide meat into 8 portions (about 4 oz. each). Place 1 portion on a work surface. Cup your hands around the meat and shape it into a rounded mound. Gently flatten patty to about ¾" thick. Season both sides with salt and pepper. Repeat with remaining portions of meat.

Prepare a grill for medium-high heat. Grill patties until lightly charred on bottom, about 3 minutes. Flip and top with a piece of cheese. Grill to desired doneness (cheese should be melted), about 3 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer patties to a cutting board and let rest 5 minutes.

While patties are resting, grill the buns, cut side down, until lightly charred around the edges, about 30 seconds.

Toss onion with vinegar, sugar, and a pinch of salt in a medium bowl and let sit, squeezing onions occasionally to soften slightly, 5 minutes.

Build sliders with patties, buns, onions, and aioli.

DO AHEAD: Patties can be formed 6 hours ahead. Cover and chill.

Italian Sundaes with Nutella

8 SERVINGS *Fior di latte ("milk flower") is a fresh cow's-milk mozzarella. In its frozen-dessert form, it's made without egg yolks so that the pure flavor of the sweet cream can shine. If you have a gelateria in your neighborhood, get a couple of pints to go. If not, use vanilla ice cream and your imagination.*

- **2 pints fior di latte gelato**
- **1 cup Nutella**
- **Coarsely chopped toasted blanched hazelnuts, crumbled amaretti cookies (Italian macaroons) and/or wafer cookies (for serving)**

Place a scoop of gelato into each chilled bowl. Spoon a dollop of Nutella over each and top with another scoop or two of gelato. Top as desired.

Go Big Before You Go Home

Romano Beans with Mustard Vinaigrette and Walnuts

8 SERVINGS *Romano beans, also known as Italian pole beans, are wide and flat and have a less delicate texture than green beans but share their mild and sweet flavor.*

- **1 cup walnuts**
- **3 lb. Romano beans or green beans, trimmed**
- **Kosher salt**
- **3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar**
- **2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard**
- **1 garlic clove, finely grated**
- **2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling**
- **½ lemon**
- **¾ cup very coarsely chopped parsley**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**

Preheat oven to 350°. Toast walnuts on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing once, until golden brown, 8–10 minutes. Let cool, then coarsely chop.

Cook Romano beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until bright green and tender, 8–10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a bowl of ice water and let cool. Drain and pat dry.

Meanwhile, mix vinegar, mustard, garlic, and 2 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl to combine. Let sit 10 minutes for flavors to come together.

Add walnuts and Romano beans to dressing. Finely zest lemon over beans and add parsley. Season with salt and lots of pepper and toss to coat. Transfer to a platter and drizzle with more oil.

Arugula with Italian Plums and Parmesan

8 SERVINGS *For the best play between sweet, hot, and salty ingredients, look for spiky arugula, labeled "rocket" or "rucola," at the farmers' market. It's much more peppery and sturdy than what you'll find at the supermarket.*

- **16 Italian plums, halved, or 8 small plums, quartered**
- **⅓ cup cocktail onions, halved, layers separated**
- **2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice**
- **2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling**
- **3 oz. arugula (about 5 cups)**
- **Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper**
- **3 oz. Parmesan, thinly sliced**

Toss plums, cocktail onions, lemon juice, and 2 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl. Add arugula, season with salt and pepper, and toss again. Transfer to a platter; top with Parmesan and drizzle with more oil.

Paccheri with Shellfish, Squid, and Tomatoes

8 SERVINGS *Yes, seafood cooks quickly, but sometimes it's worth it to spend some time building layers of flavor into a sauce as you would with a big pot of ragù.*

- **3 medium tomatoes, halved, seeds and cores removed**
- **12 oz. cleaned squid, bodies and tentacles separated**
- **6 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling**
- **1½ lb. small shrimp, preferably head-on, peeled, deveined, shells and heads reserved**
- **2 cups dry white wine, divided**
- **6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced**
- **1 lb. cockles or Manila clams, scrubbed**
- **1 lb. mussels, scrubbed, debearded**
- **½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- **2 lb. paccheri or other large tube pasta**
- **Kosher salt**
- **1 Tbsp. fish sauce (optional)**
- **1 cup torn basil**

Grate tomatoes, cut side down, on the largest holes of a box grater into a medium bowl until only the skin is left. Finely chop skin and add to bowl.

Cut squid bodies in half lengthwise, then cut each half crosswise into ½" pieces. Place in a small bowl. Cut tentacles in half crosswise; add to bowl.

Heat 3 Tbsp. oil in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium-high. Add reserved shrimp shells and heads (if using). Cook, smashing down on shells and heads, until shells are beginning to brown, 10–12 minutes. Add 1 cup wine and cook until reduced by half and alcohol aroma is gone, about 5 minutes. Add 2 cups water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a bare simmer and cook until reduced by one-third, 15–20 minutes. Let stock cool 20 minutes, then strain through a fine-mesh sieve, pressing on solids, into a heatproof measuring glass (you should have about 1½ cups). Set aside.

Wipe out pot. Pour in remaining 3 Tbsp. oil and heat over medium. Add garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until just golden, about 5 minutes. Add grated tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes thicken slightly and begin to stick to bottom of pot, 6–8 minutes. Add cockles, mussels, red pepper flakes, and remaining 1 cup wine. Cover pot and cook, shaking occasionally, until cockles and mussels are open, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer cockles and mussels to a medium bowl, leaving behind any that have not opened. Cover pot again and cook unopened cockles and mussels another minute or so, then transfer to bowl with others. Discard any that have not opened at this point. Keep shellfish sauce warm.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water, until just slightly under al dente, 6–8 minutes.

Using a heatproof measuring cup, scoop out about 1 cup pasta water. Transfer pasta to pot with sauce with a slotted spoon or mesh spider. Add reserved stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and add shrimp and squid to sauce. Cook, tossing constantly and adding pasta water a splash at a time as needed, until pasta is al dente and sauce is glossy and thick enough to cling to noodles, about 5 minutes. Add fish sauce, if using, and fold in steamed cockles and mussels. Taste and season with salt if needed.

Transfer pasta to a platter. Top with basil and drizzle with oil.

Grilled Red Mullet with Charred Onions and Pine Nuts

8 SERVINGS *The textured sweet-and-sour condiment (agrodolce) would also be excellent spooned over vegetables or chicken or tossed with cooked grains.*

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more
- ⅓ cup pine nuts
- 4 small onions, unpeeled
- ¼ cup drained capers
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- Kosher salt
- 8 whole red mullets or 4 red snappers, scales removed, cleaned
- 1 cup parsley leaves with tender stems
- Aleppo-style or other mild red pepper flakes and lemon wedges (for serving)

Preheat oven to 350° and prepare a grill for medium-high heat. Clean grate well with a brush; oil grate. Toast pine nuts on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing once, until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Let cool (that's it for the oven).

Grill onions, turning occasionally, until skins are blackened and onions have softened (some of the juices may ooze out), 15–20 minutes. Transfer to a platter and let cool 10 minutes.

Split onions in half. Remove outer peel and discard. Separate onion layers into individual petals. Transfer to a medium bowl and mix in pine nuts, capers, raisins, and vinegar; season agrodolce with salt.

Season fish cavity and skin with salt; drizzle with ¼ cup oil. Grill, resisting the urge to turn, until skin is lightly charred and flesh is flaky and opaque down to the bone, about 3 minutes for mullet and 8 minutes for snapper. Place a metal spatula underneath fish, then lift and gently roll over onto the other side. Cook until flesh is flaky and opaque, 3–8 minutes, depending on fish. If a small knife slides easily through the thickest part of flesh, fish is done.

Transfer fish to a platter and spoon agrodolce over. Top with parsley and some red pepper flakes; drizzle with oil. Serve with lemon wedges.

Grilled Bistecca with Herby Fish Sauce

8 SERVINGS *Why baste your steak with fish sauce? It's called umami. Get into it.*

- 2 1½"–2"-thick porterhouse steaks (about 6 lb. total)
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt
- 3 Tbsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- ¼ cup fish sauce
- 2 Tbsp. coarsely chopped marjoram, rosemary, and/or thyme

Rub steak with ¼ cup oil; season with salt and sprinkle with pepper (it should nearly cover both sides). Let sit at room temperature 30 minutes.

Mix garlic, fish sauce, herbs, and remaining ¼ cup oil in a small bowl.

Prepare a grill for medium-high indirect heat (for a gas grill, leave one or two burners off; for a charcoal grill, bank coals on one side of grill). Grill steaks over direct heat until nicely charred, about 2 minutes per side. Move steaks over indirect heat and continue grilling, basting with fish sauce mixture, until browned all over, about 5 minutes per side. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of steaks should register 120° for rare; temperature will rise to 125° (or medium-rare) as they rest. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest 20 minutes before slicing against the grain.

Brioche au Rhum

8 SERVINGS *Baba au rhum but with store-bought brioche. Because only professionals can pull off the real thing.*

- 8 brioche sliders (about 1½ oz. each), split
- 2¼ cups sugar
- 1½ cups dark rum
- 4 2x1" strips orange zest
- Pinch of kosher salt
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 16 fresh figs, torn

Preheat oven to 375°. Toast buns, cut side down, on a baking sheet until golden brown, about 6 minutes; let cool.

Meanwhile, cook sugar, rum, orange zest, and salt in a medium saucepan over medium heat 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, 6 minutes. Pluck out and discard orange zest. Add vanilla and let syrup cool slightly. Transfer ½ cup syrup to a bowl; reserve the rest for serving.

Working one at time, gently dunk and turn brioche in syrup until evenly coated and soaked through, about 30 seconds each. Place on a wire rack set over paper towels; let sit 5 minutes. Repeat dunking process with brioche and let rest 10 minutes (you want them to get sticky).

Beat cream in a medium bowl to medium-soft peaks. Divide brioche among plates and top with a dollop of whipped cream. Arrange a few figs around and drizzle with a bit of the reserved syrup.

SIX DEGREES OF IGNACIO MATTOS

The guest list

- *Chef and ceramist* **Fernando Aciar**
- **Jessica Barros**
- *The brilliant* **Gabriela Cámara,** *chef of SF's Cala and Mexico City's Contramar*
- **Thomas Carter,** *Mattos' business partner and head of debauchery*
- **Candace Currin**
- *Makr's* **Jason Gregory,** *the only one who knew how to drive the boat*
- *Interpol's* **Daniel Kessler**
- *Unis designer* **Eunice Lee**
- **Susannah Liguori**
- *Flora Bar chef (and Mattos mind reader)* **Jake Nemmers**
- **Euni Park**
- *Zuni Café's Hermès-loving owner* **Gilbert Pilgram**
- *Tartine baker* **Chad Robertson**
- **David M. Sullivan**
- *Chef, writer, and Speedo enthusiast* **David Tanis**
- **Gabe Ulla,** *who has probably finished writing the Estela book by now*
- **Alex Vallis**
- *BRVTVS designer* **Caroline Ventura**


Sur la table
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YOUR NEW FAVORITE FOOD CITY


1

This may be the first time you've heard of the burgeoning culinary scene in ***Greenville****,* ***South Carolina****, but it won't be the last. This bustling little city—now finding its place alongside Charleston and Aspen at the top of must-visit lists—takes its farm-to-fork movement seriously, so it's time to think about getting there before the secret is out and all the best restaurants are impossible to book.*

LIKE SO MANY OF THE EMERGING food capitals of the South, Greenville, SC, is ripe with delicious choices of cafés, breweries, bars, and restaurants—all focused on highlighting fresh, organic local ingredients.

The acclaimed East Greenville restaurant Bacon Bros. Public House has its own full charcuterie program and offers a delicious made-from-scratch menu. The vibe inside is rustic and comfortable with upcycled interiors made of local pallet wood. The charcuterie is obviously a hit, but they also offer their spin on traditional BBQ, a variety of colorful salads, fresh local seafood, and entrées that use fresh local produce.

If beer is your drink of choice, the family-owned and -run brewery Birds Fly South Ale Project, where they craft their own with a throwback approach, is worth checking out. The urban farmhouse tasting room at Hampton Station in the Water Tower District houses two bars, an outdoor patio, and a Biergarten where you can kick back and try a variety of their beers while enjoying live music.

Finally, when you need that nightcap in downtown Greenville, SC, don't forget to look "underground." The subterranean speakeasy Vault & Vator has a sophisticated vibe and is the perfect spot for sipping made-to-order craft cocktails that incorporate local herbs, spices, fruits, and spirits.


2



3

1— *Catfish Toast from Bacon Bros. Public House.*

2— *A Pimm's Garden with cucumber juice, lemon sherbet, ginger tea, and mint from Vault & Vator.*

3—*The Birds and the (Bee)ts, made with local honey and beets from Birds Fly South Ale Project.*

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For seafood that's off the hook, nobody does it better than The Florida Keys. With the Atlantic on one side and the Gulf of Mexico on the other, it's a seafood bounty you have to see to believe. From roadside fish stands to seafood markets to our winter seafood festival, there's something for every taste. Of course, if the world's freshest seafood doesn't reel you in, our succulent Key Lime Pie surely will.

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THE KEYS HAVE LONG BEEN known as the perfect destination for a relaxing vacation away from the world. With some of the country's best fishing and diving, a thriving art and music scene, a wide variety of restaurants and bars, and a legendary laid-back attitude—The Florida Keys have it all.

In addition to all that relaxation, the Keys' culinary diversity will leave quite an impression. Boasting everything from five-star foodie havens to funky local joints, it's a food lover's paradise. Whether you're craving crispy conch fritters at a roadside fish shack, mouthwatering and succulent Florida lobster tails, or a bite of something sweet—you're sure to find it here.

And for seafood fans, nobody does it better than The Florida Keys & Key West. With the Atlantic on one side and the Gulf of Mexico on the other, it's an ocean bounty you have to see to believe. Take a drive and stop by one of the many roadside fish stands or plan your visit to coincide with their renowned winter seafood festival, where there's something for every taste.

Of course, if the world's freshest seafood doesn't reel you in, their succulent Key Lime Pie surely will. Many area restaurants serve their homemade version of this classic dessert made with the distinctly sweet-tart flavor of Florida Key Limes—a true local favorite!

1— *Fresh caught Mahi-Mahi, a staple on many local seafood restaurant menus.*

2— *A slice of sweet-tart Key Lime Pie is sure to satisfy any dessert lover's cravings.*

3— *The perfect time to have a cocktail and watch a stunning sunset.*

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prep school

ROM THE BON APPÉTIT TEST KITCHEN



Get to the center of the heart for those tasty leaves.

FROM P. 46

RAMP UP

Fresh-from-the-earth ramps need a good cleaning before heading for fritters, pickles, or pasta. Here's how to treat these wild leeks right. —*CHRISTINA CHAEY*



1.
Remove any slippery outer layers from bulbs, trim roots, then soak in a bowl of cold water, swishing around gently to loosen any dirt.



2.
Lift out the ramps and blot dry with paper towels. Avoid cramming them in a salad spinner so as not to damage the delicate leaves.



3.
Cut away the leaves from the bulbs. Wrap separately in damp paper towels and store in a plastic bag in the fridge. Use within 3 days.

FROM P. 118

THE OTHER LEAFY GREEN

I used to think only the outermost stalks in a bunch of celery were worth eating. I was so wrong. It turns out the best part of the vegetable is the **tender leaves** that hide in the pale green stalks at the center of the heart. A handful of whole leaves adds subtle celery flavor and soft crunch to any salad, makes a pretty garnish for soup or beans, and can stand in for other leafy herbs like parsley in a pinch. I'm digging them in our riff on salsa verde, which is also great with chicken or steak. —C.C.



FROM P. 119

Acid Trip

A high-quality balsamic vinegar tastes nothing like the stuff you find at the cafeteria salad bar. Most grocers stock many brands, but picking one of quality is a crapshoot. After tasting more than a dozen kinds, we fell for **Acetaia Malpighi Balsamo of Modena ($20 for 250 ml; dolceterra.com)**. It has a slightly thick consistency and a tart-sweet flavor that adds a boost to dishes without being overpowering. We're tossing it with eggplant before roasting, drizzling it on vanilla ice cream, and whisking it into complex-tasting vinaigrettes. —*SAMANTHA SIEGFRIED*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHELSIE CRAIG



FROM P. 105

AMARETTI FOR MORE

One should never be too far from a tin of Lazzaroni amaretti cookies ($24 for 16 oz.; amazon.com). Inside the beautiful red box are tiny almond-flavored biscuits that come wrapped in pairs in pastel tissue paper. They're delightfully crunchy with the slightest chew and an airy interior and are delicious dipped in coffee. We got crafty with them in all kinds of desserts this month, whether **in tiramisù or crumbled over panna cotta or an ice cream sundae**. After you quietly eat the entire tin before you know what hit you, reuse it to hold tissues at your desk or to store those "calming" cat treats, then order another one before you go into withdrawal. —ALEX BEGGS



TEST KITCHEN TALK

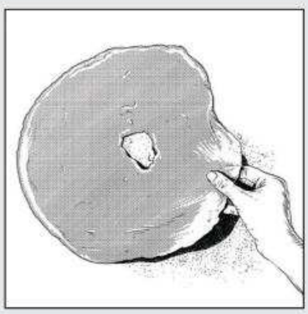
Claire Saffitz,
senior food editor

*"That bottle of Angostura bitters on your bar cart isn't just a one-trick pony. I like to **add a tablespoon to fruit jams and pie fillings**. The flavors of the herbs and botanicals complement the natural floral sweetness of ripe fruit. Bitters also add complexity (and a vibrant red color) to meat glazes and barbecue sauces. A little goes a long way, so start with a few dashes and add to taste."*

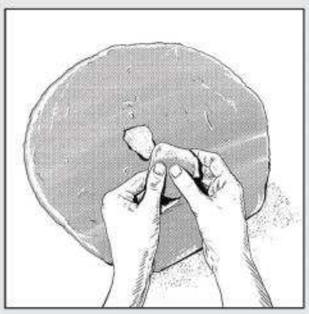
FROM P. 116

IN CRUST WE TRUST

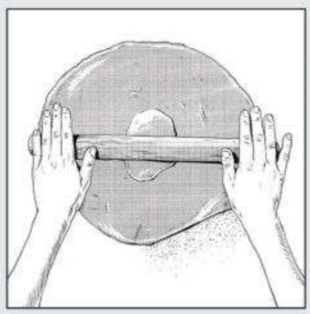
Your pie dough can be more prone to cracking if it sports some dry spots where the flour isn't fully hydrated (this is usually caused by undermixing the dough). If this happens, all is not lost! Try this handy method for patching up a tear by using extra dough from the edge of the crust as a sealant. Use a bench scraper or knife to make a clean cut off the edge of the crust. —C.S.



1.
If you see cracks starting to form in your crust while rolling, dust with more flour to make sure the dough isn't sticking to the surface.



2.
Use a knife or bench scraper to cut off a piece of dough from the edge that's slightly larger than the size of the tear.



3.
Press the piece of dough into the crack with your fingers, focusing on sealing the edges. Continue to roll out normally.


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FROM P. 118

MORE MAYO, PLEASE

If you're making a small batch of homemade mayo or aioli, emulsifying your eggs and oil with a whisk and some elbow grease works perfectly well. But if you're whipping up a party-size amount, **a food processor speeds up the task considerably**. Blitz your eggs first, then with the motor running, slowly stream in the oil, occasionally scraping down the sides of the bowl with a spatula. If the mixture gets too thick, add water by the tablespoonful. Now mix in some flavor—we've got three ideas to get you started. –c.c.

GREEN GODDESS	SPICY	RANCH-Y
Chopped tender herbs	Sriracha	Onion powder
+	+	+
Lemon juice	Lime juice	Buttermilk
+	+	+
Mashed anchovy fillets	Toasted sesame oil	Chopped chives





Instant Coffee 2.0

Instant coffee has come a long way from the stale-tasting stuff I used to keep around for emergencies (but never touched). A few of our coffee-fanatic editors recently sampled seven different brands, and our favorite by far was **Mount Hagen Organic Fairtrade Instant Coffee** ($12 for 25 sticks; amazon.com), which won us over with its rich, toasty, and slightly bitter (in a good way) flavor. It comes in single-serving pouches so you can dump it into a mug, add hot water, and drink up. *–ASHLEY MASON*



FROM P. 116

TWICE AS NICE

Our stunning Torta Pasqualina, an Italian savory pie traditionally served on Easter, is stuffed with a decadent mixture of eggs, ricotta, and a mountain of Swiss chard leaves. The secret to a crisp crust and luscious filling is to squeeze every bit of liquid out of the blanched greens before chopping them up and adding to the rest of the filling mixture. Wrap them in cheesecloth or a dish towel for easy handling. If you want a little extra insurance, do like senior food editor Andy Baraghani and give the greens a second squeeze after chopping the leaves. –c.c.



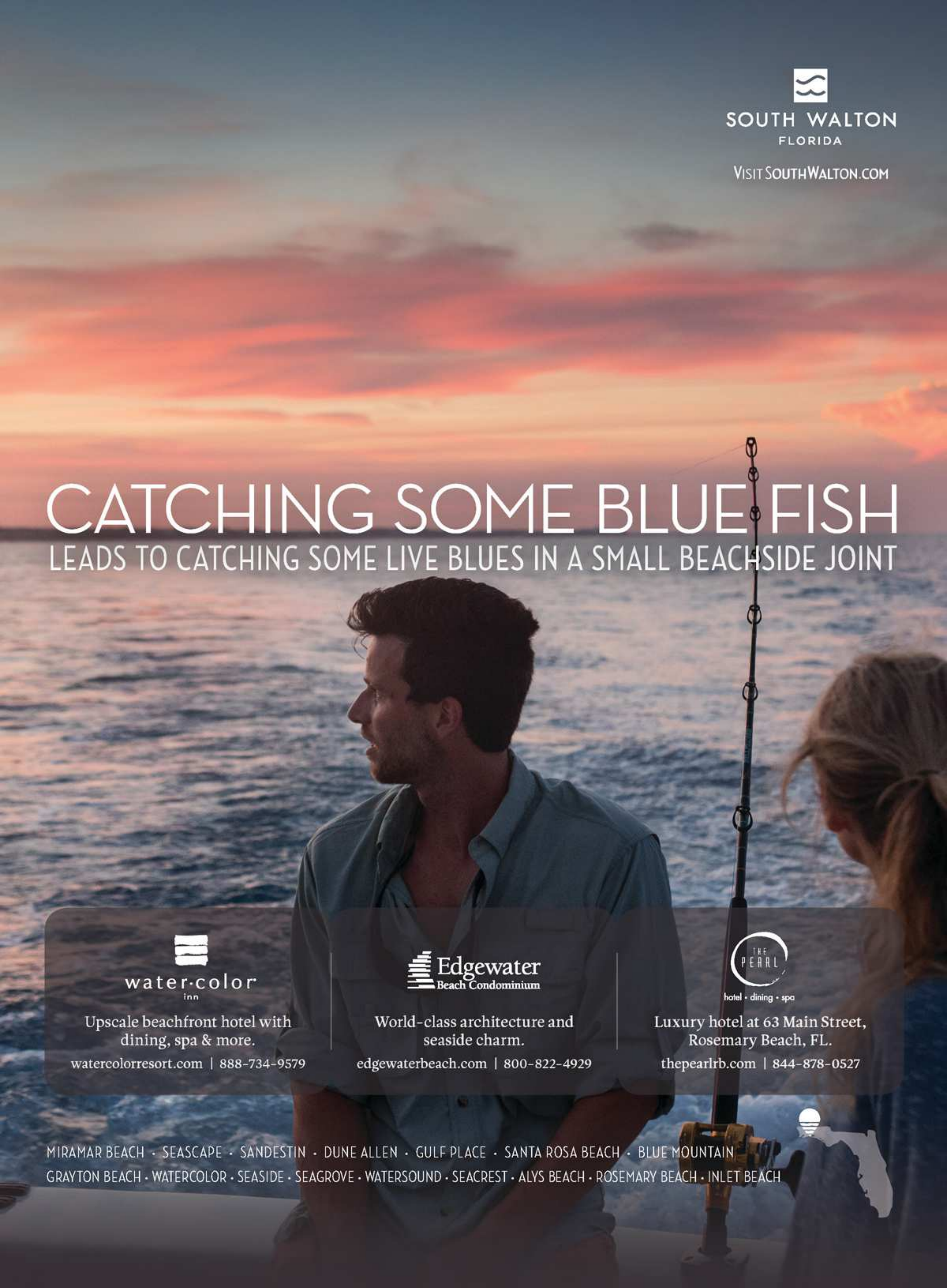
FROM P. 116

EAT YOUR STEMS

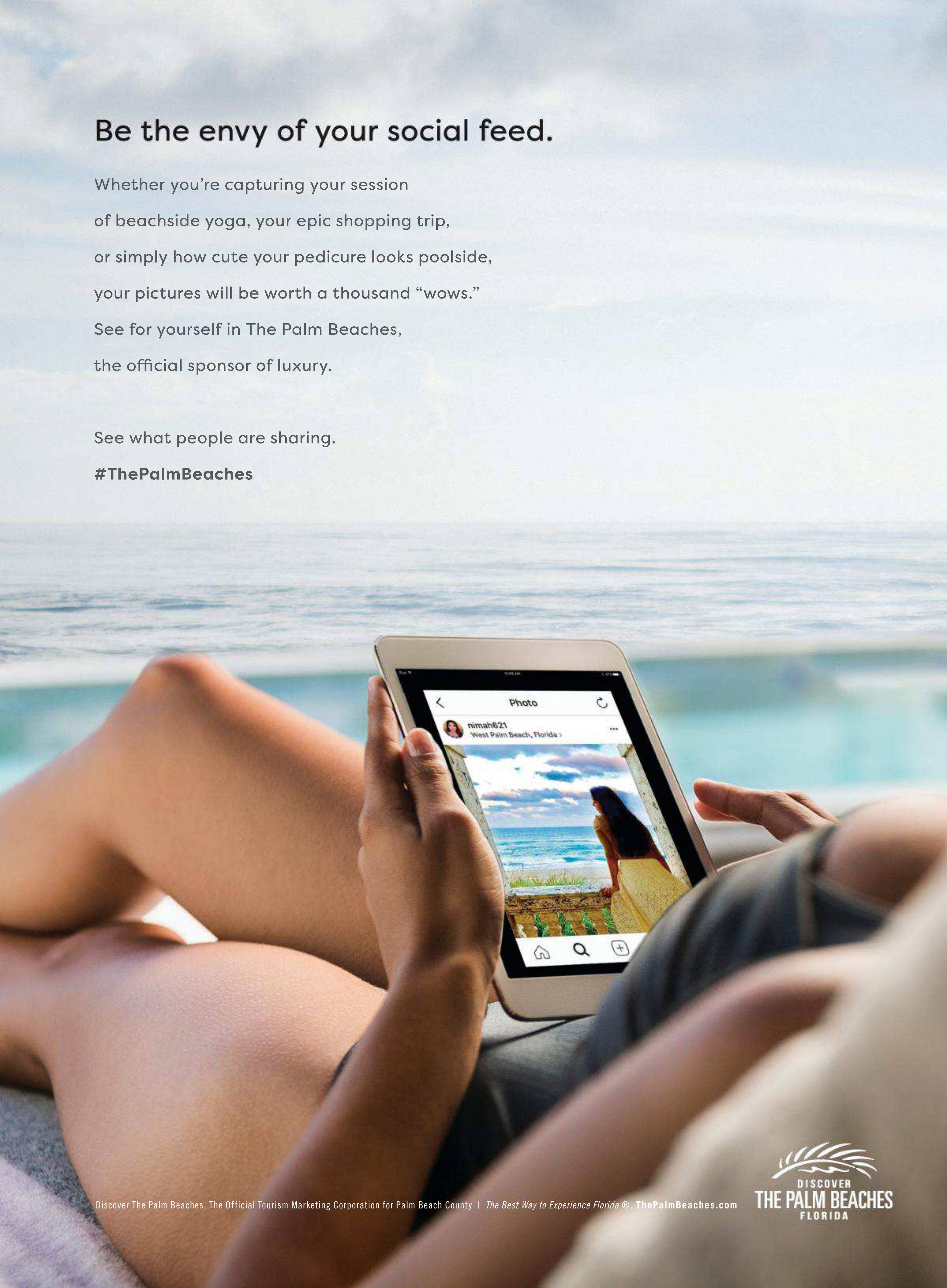
We love adding a handful of versatile Swiss chard leaves to pastas, soups, and frittatas for a quick power-greens boost. The crunchy, earthy stems left behind are like a tasty bonus worth eating all on their own. **A quick sauté with garlic and shallots** will convince you to never toss them again. For a pickle, bring **1 cup distilled white vinegar**, **2 Tbsp. kosher salt**, **2 tsp. sugar**, and 2 cups water to a boil in a saucepan. Pour brine into a 1-qt. jar packed with **chard stems** to cover and chill. –c.c.

FOOD STYLING BY ANNA BILLINGSKOG. ILLUSTRATIONS: JOE WILSON (RAMPS, BALSAMIC VINEGAR, CRUST, COFFEE, TORTA PASQUALINA); BRUCE HUTCHISON (PORTRAIT).


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1



2



3

THE PALM BEACHES, FLORIDA, HAVE long captured the interest of sun seekers, but now more people than ever are rediscovering this historic destination. Set among the sprawling 2,200 square miles between the Atlantic Ocean and rich farmland along Lake Okeechobee, The Palm Beaches get the best of both worlds when it comes to fresh, organic ingredients and freshly caught seafood.

Recently, their culinary scene has been shaken and stirred with a growth of cocktail bars, local craft breweries, an organic winery, and savory dishes handcrafted by James Beard Foundation–recognized chefs.

While visiting, brunch connoisseurs can indulge in numerous high-end dining experiences. Try a high-society Sunday brunch on the veranda of the International Polo Club in The Palm Beaches' city of Wellington. Guests can indulge in fabulous cuisine while enjoying a thrilling polo game and live entertainment. The Breakers is another delicious option featuring a brunch with traditional favorites like Belgian waffles, omelets, and fresh fruit, alongside more eclectic dishes like carved beef tenderloin, domestic caviar, and Alaskan king crab legs.

Want time to relax and enjoy the sun and sand in between? You'll have 47 miles of pristine beaches to choose from along the Atlantic Ocean. Try a remote, secluded beach, or one in Palm Beach steps away from Worth Avenue, or visit John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, where the beauty is stunning.

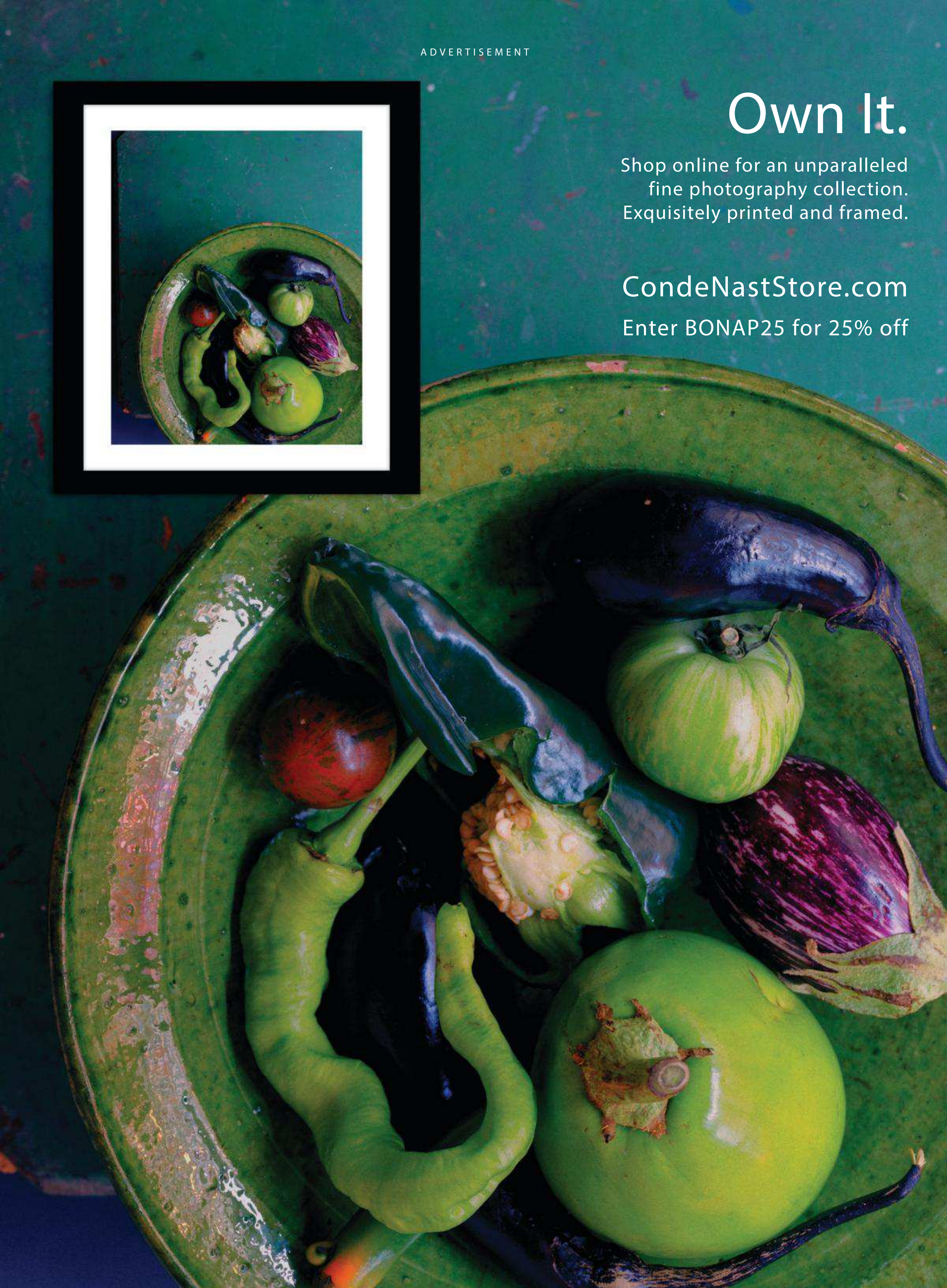
Whichever fun-filled activity you choose to discover , The Palm Beaches offer something perfect for everyone.

1—*Mouthwatering local seafood served up at Costa Palm Beach.*

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FRITTATA-RAMA

I'm hard-pressed to think of a recipe more versatile than a frittata. It's perfect any time of day and delicious hot or at room temperature, plus it makes a meal out of your farmers' market haul (and any leftovers you have languishing in the fridge). Our stovetop method provides plenty of visual cues every step of the way and delivers tender, golden results.
—CLAIRE SAFFITZ



1—BACON IS BEST

Cook **1 Tbsp. olive oil** and **3 oz. chopped bacon** in a medium nonstick skillet over medium-low, stirring, until crisp, 5–8 minutes. Add **1 chopped medium onion**; cook, stirring, until translucent, 5 minutes.



2—COVER AND COOK

Add **6 oz. new potatoes or baby Yukon Gold potatoes, sliced into ¼"-thick rounds**, and toss to coat. Cover skillet with a lid (or a baking sheet) and cook until potatoes are fork-tender, 12–15 minutes.



3—GRAB YOUR GREENS

Add **4 cups chopped Swiss chard leaves**. Season with **salt** and **pepper** and cook, stirring, until wilted, 3 minutes. Whisk **8 large eggs** in a bowl until streak-free, then mix in **4 oz. grated sharp cheddar**.



4—CURDS ARE KEY

Scrape egg mixture into skillet and stir with a heatproof spatula to distribute. Stir rapidly to create curds, also scraping around edges of skillet as egg sets. Push curds toward center of skillet.



5—LET IT FLOW

Once eggs are softly scrambled, smooth top, reduce heat to low, and let cook undisturbed until edges are set, about 5 minutes. Lift edges with spatula and tilt skillet to let uncooked egg flow underneath.



6—TURN IT OUT

Continue to cook until egg is no longer runny, about 3 minutes. Shake skillet to loosen frittata, then carefully invert onto a plate. Add **1 Tbsp. olive oil** to skillet, swirl to coat, and slide frittata back into pan.



7—THE SLOW SET

Cook until eggs are completely set, about 5 minutes. Let cool in skillet 5 minutes, then invert onto a wire rack so the underside faces up. (This lets steam escape as the frittata cools.)



8—CUT AND SERVE

Cut frittata into wedges and serve alongside a salad with a lemony vinaigrette. **Do ahead:** Frittata can be made 1 day ahead. Let cool; cover and chill. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Mix and Match

We've got some ideas to get you started on the road to frittata heaven. Choose one ingredient from each category and maybe an extra veg or two. Just make sure everything is cooked before you add the eggs and cheese.

THE PROTEIN

Diced ham

Cooked sausage

Chorizo

THE VEG

Hardy greens (kale, arugula, spinach)

Roasted asparagus

Cooked broccoli

THE CHEESE

Crumbled feta

Fontina

Goat cheese

THE STARCH

Canned chickpeas

Cooked grains

Corn

FOOD STYLING BY REBECCA JURKEVICH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX LAU


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San Antonio 1718: Art from Viceregal Mexico at San Antonio Museum of Art

Culinaria Wine and Food Festival

Zoorassic Park at San Antonio Zoo

Predators vs Prey: Dinosaurs on the Land Before Texas at The Witte Museum

JUNE OPENINGS & EVENTS

Electronic Ocean at SeaWorld & Aquatica San Antonio

Summer of Spain at Pearl

Spain: 500 Years of Spanish Painting from the Museums of Madrid at San Antonio Museum of Art

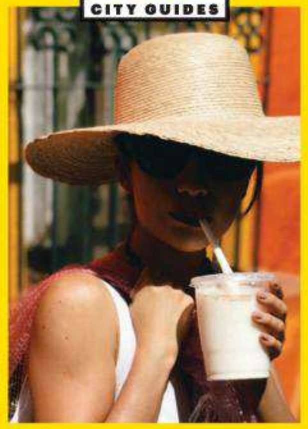
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recipe index



Morning light meets last night's dinner party. P. 110

FOR NUTRITIONAL INFO FOR THE RECIPES IN THIS ISSUE, GO TO **BONAPPETIT.COM/RECIPES**

sourcebook

TRAVEL PLANNER

THE GUIDE pp. 13–38

BAR 63 Rolandstrasse 19, Zurich; +41-44-241-7583; *bar63.ch*

B. PATISSERIE 2821 California St., San Francisco; 415-440-1700; *bpatisserie.com*

COFFEE Grüngasse 4., Zurich; *coffeezurich.com*

CRAFTSMAN AND WOLVES For locations, go to *craftsman-wolves.com*

GAMPER RESTAURANT Nietengasse 1, Zurich; +41-44-221-1177; *gamper-restaurant.ch*

LE JULES VERNE Eiffel Tower, 2nd. Fl.; Paris; +33-1-4555-6144; *lejulesverne-paris.com*

TARTINE BAKERY & CAFE 600 Guerrero St., San Francisco; 415-487-2600; *tartinebakery.com*

THE SEASON pp. 43–52

KACHKA 720 SE Grand Ave., Portland, OR; 503-235-0059; *kachkapdx.com*

LORING PLACE 21 W. Eighth St., NYC; 212-388-1831; *loringplacenyc.com*

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THE FEED pp. 66–68

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SUMMER LIKE AN ITALIAN pp. 80–121

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THE LAST BITE p. 138

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Maira Kalman
What will you travel for?



THE VITALS

Born in
Tel Aviv

Raised in
The Bronx

You may have seen her work in
The New Yorker, The New York Times, The Met

Favorite cakes
Lemon pound cake and lemon cheesecake (with coffee!)

For artist and author Maira Kalman, the above image sums it up. **"That painting is my ideal world," she says: "Cake and coffee served in a garden."** This page from her new book, *Cake*—which is as devoted to its title subject as you'd guess—was inspired by a trip to Delacroix's museum in Paris. In fact, places where pastry and history intersect figure prominently on Kalman's travel bucket list. "I will track down the patisserie where Gertrude Stein had her éclair, contemplating whether she should buy the Cézanne—we should all have such problems!" she says. "In Berlin I'll visit Café Einstein; in Vienna I'll stay at the Hotel Sacher," home of the chocolate Sacher torte. "You know what?" she concludes. "Food is important." That's evident to anyone familiar with her work, such as her 28 books featuring countless sweets and her illustrations for Michael Pollan's *Food Rules. Cake* combines her whimsical paintings and wistful text with recipes by her friend Barbara Scott-Goodman. Kalman depicts a pink cake in Rome, a sweet remedy for heartbreak, and the honey cake her Israeli cousin bakes for her visits. "I'm always going back to New York with a suitcase full of cake," she says, "which I distribute like a miser to family." Not all souvenirs are for sharing. —***CHRISTINE MUHLKE***

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